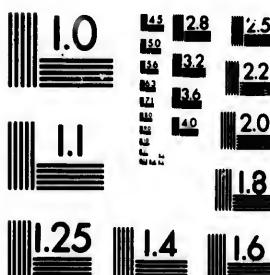
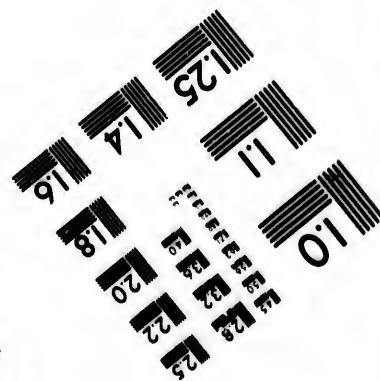
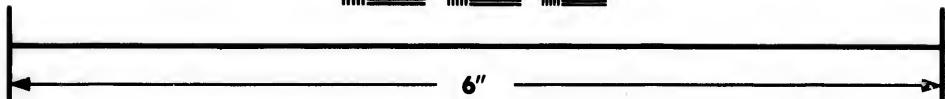


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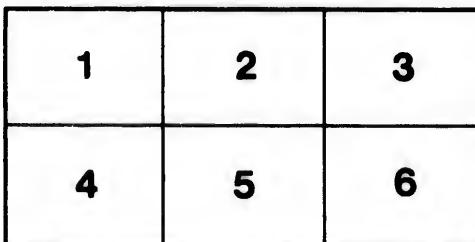
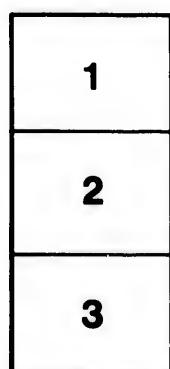
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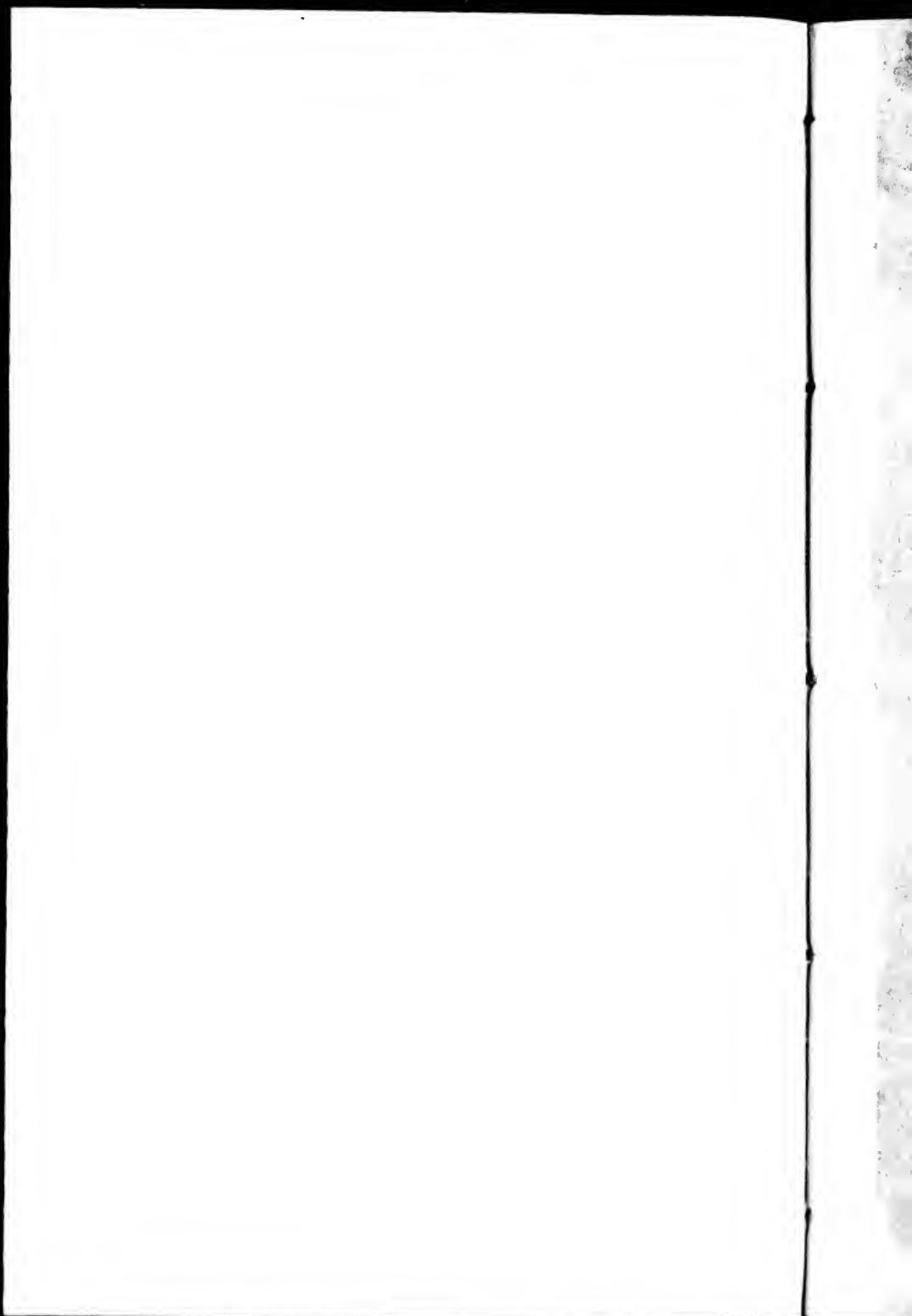
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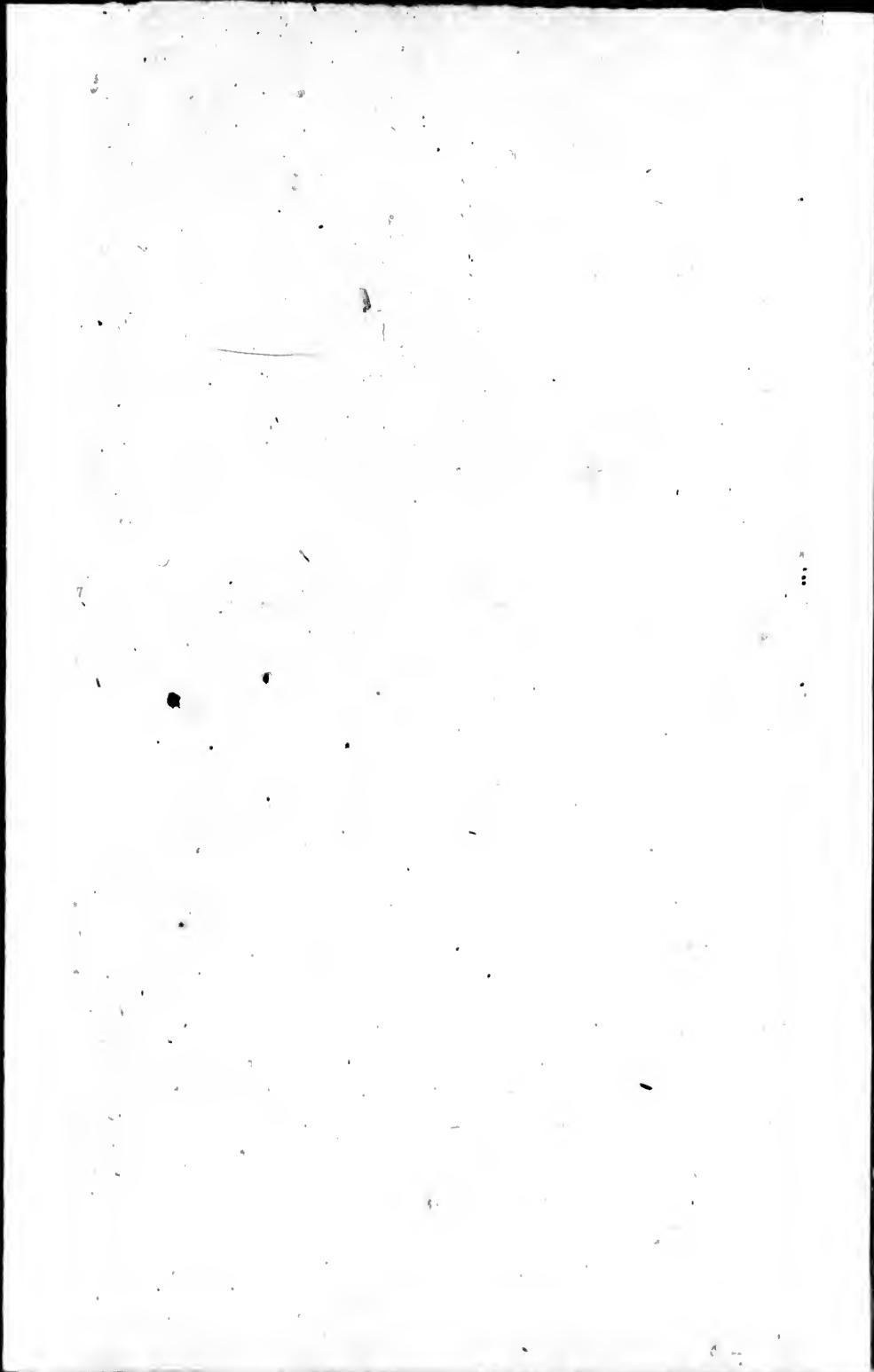
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George C. Chapin
1858

CHAPIN'S REVIEW
OF
ARMSTRONG'S NOTICES
OF THE
WAR of 1812.



Richard
Carl Eric

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CHAPIN'S REVIEW

or

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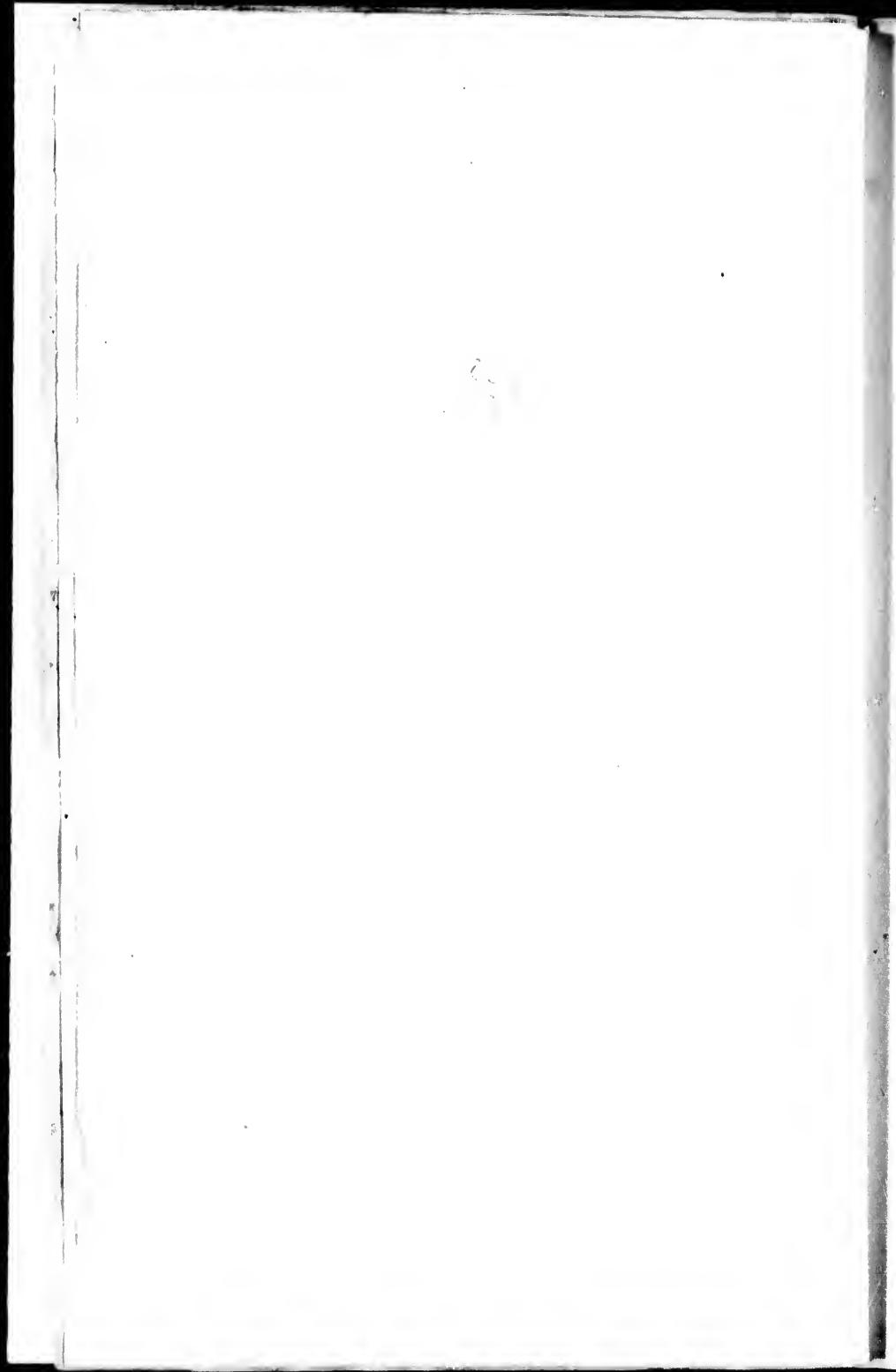
OF THE

W A R O F 1812.

BLACK ROCK:

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1836.



TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

I am not a book-maker either by profession or practice: Nor have I at the late stage of life at which I have arrived, either disposition or leisure, to make any more display than is necessary in obedience to the first impulse of nature—self-defence.

The recent appearance of a book entitled “Notices of the War of 1812,” by JOHN ARMSTRONG, in which the writer attempts to place me in a base, ridiculous, and even criminal point of view, is the sole occasion of calling the attention of the public to a subject which common sense might have given General Armstrong warning to shun. If truth and justice are not important—if malevolence, falsehood, and ignorance with regard to some of the most common, but material facts, are to be the measure of merit, then are these ‘notices’ to be placed in the very uppermost niche in the Temple of Fame.

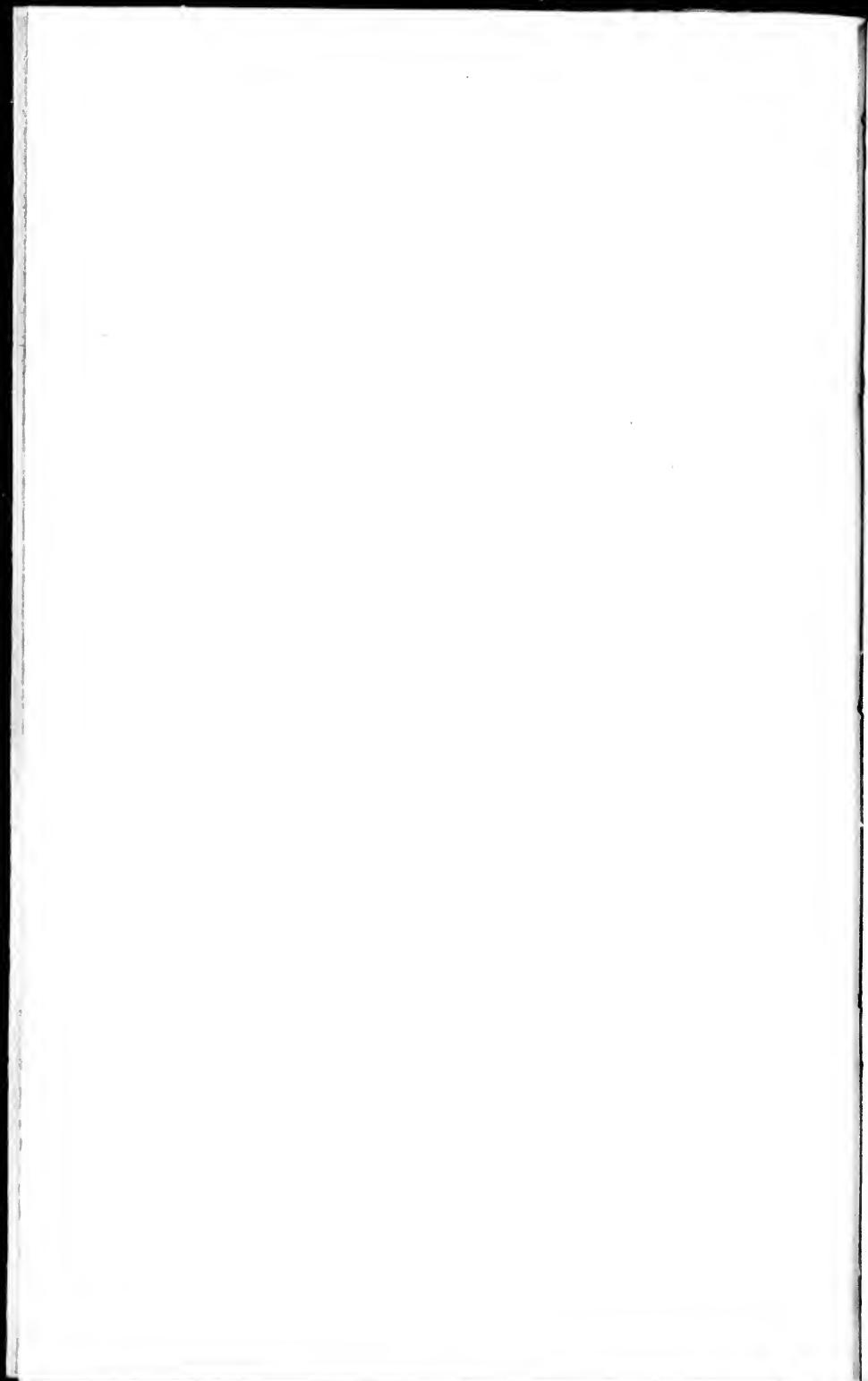
It is time that our wonderful “Secretary stood alone,”—It is time that he had long felt himself neglected and forgotten, when the resource appears to have occurred to him, of raking from oblivion, all he could find of spleen and garrulity in the memory of the late Col. Boerstler; behind whose shade he seeks to entrench himself. This skulking, serpentine course shall not answer his purpose. It is unworthy of a soldier, and proves the historian faithless. Of the deeds of the “Secretary” the country had ample proof during the war. In two wars indeed he has been conspicuous. Of the character of his labors, the public had long been satisfied: There remained no doubt but that “he left his country for his country’s

good." Sorry indeed must have been his condition, when, for want of facts, he was driven to found his "notices" on fiction; and that too of a dangerous nature—pestilent to those he assails destructive only to himself. His celebrity originated in his being reputed to be the author of the Newburgh Letters so called, and of a Review of Wilkinson's Memoirs. The first of these productions in point of style, would do credit to a far better scholar than he is. Both the spirit and matter of it would have been cherished to maturity, nowhere, but in a mind reckless of every interest but its own—and of that grossly ignorant. The last mentioned production entitles the writer to the palm of scurrility. To obtain this palm, there was no necessity for this production. He might have rested his claim upon the abuse he has endeavored to throw upon some of the best men, and best established characters of this nation. Was it not reasonable to hope that age would soften the feelings and subdue the temper which had been excited by disappointed ambition? What excuse can he have for casting his venom on those who never did, nor wished him harm? some of whom, on the contrary, stood forth in the common defence, and breasted the storm of battle where he never dared to venture his head. If those whom he foolishly thinks he can make the victims of his malice, were in truth the poor, blundering, half mad, half foolish creatures he would represent them, still he should remember that "they who live in glass houses should never begin throwing of stones." Frailty! Is thy name John Armstrong? Indeed and indeed when this man is stripped of his fictitious consequence, he is quite a small man—there is hardly enough left of him for an antagonist.

As I have not sought this discussion, I will not shun it. I will not submit passively to such charges as are contained in the "Notices" without repelling them. But I will attend to whatever communication may be made to me as a gentleman. But the Secretary and his friends McClure and Boerstler will none of them be run away from, but their efforts may prove too much for themselves—they may, for aught I can assure them, meet the fate of the little insect that dies in shooting its sting. Whatever may be the consequence to any party, truth must be told. Whoever may be the calumniator, he must sooner or later be exhibited in a just light, to the public.

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Error and party interest ever seek by-ways and shun the light: while truth will have light, and even though, "like the mangled body of Osiris, it should be hewn into a thousand pieces, and scattered to the four winds; it shall be gathered limb to limb, and moulded with every joint and member, into unfading beauty."

As I have acknowledged myself ignorant of the art of book-making, that, I hope will be deemed a sufficient apology for any defects in style or arrangement which may appear in this defence, against the "notices" which were made without foundation or excuse, and I trust I may rely on the candor of the public, for a fair hearing.

CYRENIUS CHAPIN.

Buffalo, July, 1836.

R E V I E W .

AT the breaking out of the last war, I was residing with my family at Buffalo. I was in good business, and we were in prosperous circumstances. I volunteered to fight and joined the army, while my family became refugees. We all suffered pretty severely. I made every exertion in my power to encourage others, and very often, as is known to numbers yet living, and who did the same, hazarded my life, and in several instances came near losing it; having been several times, and twice severely, wounded. I have no pretensions to extraordinary merit; but I honestly thought, that those who joined the army, in its then condition, as volunteers, deserved well of their country, myself among the rest. It will be no matter of wonder then, that my indignation should be roused, by reading, above twenty years afterwards, in a book written by the man who was Secretary at war of the United States, during that War, the following passages, literally copied from that book, which I cannot well refrain from saying, contain some truth, some gross blunders, and many falsehoods.

Since I shall here insert the sentence that first roused me, I will insert here also, all I intend to extract from Armstrong's work.

E X T R A C T S .

Narrative of the Expedition from Fort George to the Beaver Dams, Upper Canada.

"On June 23d, 1813, *soi disant* Major Chapin called at the tent of Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler, on the plains of Newark; talked largely about having scoured all the country with his forty followers; that he had been to the Beaver Dams; that the enemy had fortified Decoo's stone house; that there were one company of regulars, and from sixty to one hundred Indians at that post. That if this stronghold was destroyed, the enemy could no longer show himself in this quarter; that five hundred men with a couple of field-pieces could effect this, &c. &c.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler knowing this man to be a vain boasting liar, and suspecting his fidelity, from various circumstances, amongst which was that of having joined a committee to remonstrate against the war, and that of coming forward as spokesman, in favor of a man charged by many of his neighbors with giving intelligence to the enemy—he was heard by Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler with indifference, and dismissed with coolness. A messenger now ar-

rived to inform Lieutenant-Colonel Baerstler that General Boyd desired to see him at his quarters. When arrived, he was asked, 'have you seen Major Chapin?'

"'Yes, sir.'

"'Has he mentioned any thing of an expedition?' He talked (as above related.)

"'It is intended to send five hundred men and two field-pieces to capture or dislodge the enemy, and batter down Decoo's house; and you are to have the command.'

"'Very well, sir; when do I march?'

"'This evening; you will call at the Adjutant-General's office for your orders.'

"He called, and the Adjutant-General having commenced to explain the object of the expedition, he was interrupted with 'You are a soldier, and will excuse me when I demand my orders in writing.'

"'Certainly, sir.'

"They were written, and Lieutenant-Colonel Baerstler marched, about dark, with five hundred men, consisting of Captain McDowell's company of light artillery, with a twelve and six pounder, twenty dragoons under Cornet Burd, Major Chapin's thirty-eight or forty mounted militia, and the rest composed of infantry of the fourteenth, sixth, and twenty-third regiments. The riflemen ordered to join this expedition, (and which were all-important,) were, by Lieut. Colonel Milton, the commander of the second Brigade, contrary to all rule, placed on guard, and could not be relieved.

"The detachment arrived at Queenston about eleven o'clock P. M., in great silence. Patrols and pickets were immediately sent out to prevent citizens from escaping to give intelligence; no candles were suffered to be lighted, and officers and men laid down on their arms. After day-break, the detachment proceeded, and near St. David's an Indian scout was killed by a flanker, while another made his escape. At St. David's the commander discovered that Maj. Chapin's knowledge of the roads was not to be relied on. He accordingly interrogated various inhabitants, and proceeded several miles, when arriving at a cross-road, he demanded of some of Major Chapin's men where that road led to? They replied, they did not know. 'How, not know! were you not here two days ago?' 'No, sir; not within several miles as far.'

"The commander now perceived that the General had been inveigled to risk this detachment on doubtful intelligence.

"Two British officers were discovered at some distance reconnoitering, and presently bugles and musketry conveyed the alarm in the direction of St. Catharine's. The commander viewed the ground, and observed, 'Gentlemen, here we must fight on our return.' The detachment proceeded until within a mile and a half of Decoo's house, in the original order of march, that is, the mounted militia in front, the commanding officer at the head of the detachment from the fourteenth regiment—the artillery and wagons—Major Taylor at the head of the companies of the sixth and twenty-third regiments—the dragoons in the rear, and flankers out on the right and left from each company. Having passed the road from St. Catharine's, where it crosses the mountain-road, by which the detachment marched, a piece of woods on either side of the road, some fields ahead, the Indians fired a volley on the rear guard, and killed and wounded three or four men. The detachment was forced to the right, and in a moment the action became general. The wagons, artillery, horses, and dragoons were ordered to the rear, out of reach of the enemy's fire.

"Some of the *sot distant* Major Chapin's men now demanded, 'Where is our commander? What are we to do?' The commanding officer looked for him in vain, and replied, 'You have no commander but myself; turn into the ranks and fight with my men.' Some did so; others found it as convenient to *join* their commander in the hollow, alongside the wagons.

"The second in command, Major Taylor, was unhorsed the first fire, and afterwards fought on foot. The surgeon remained until his horse was twice wounded, when he was ordered to the wagons. Thus, the commanding officer alone was mounted, and consequently compelled to carry his own orders to

every point where they became necessary. He received a shot through the thigh in the early part of the action, which he concealed, fearing a bad impression might be made on his troops.

"After the contest had continued some time, the commanding officer endeavored to make it decisive: for which purpose he left orders with Major Taylor to protect the artillery, &c.; and forming the fourteenth into single file, a company on each flank thrown back *en pente*, a charge at quick step was commenced through the woods, and part of the enemy driven across the field, where many fell. The charge having been made obliquely to the right, in order to drive the enemy into the cleared ground—this was no sooner effected, than a furious attack commenced on our left. The charge was now continued obliquely to the left, and the enemy driven to a considerable distance; but, however, without keeping up a constant fire on us, which from the thickness of the woods, and mode of fighting, where every combatant is his own commander, was perfectly in his power. Finding, in short, that musketeers unaccustomed to fighting in any other than a regular order, could not maintain so unequal a contest without great loss, a party of skirmishers were ordered, and the troops retreated by filing to the rear, from the right of companies. After reaching again the small field, the line was again formed behind the fence, (the enemy having advanced as we retreated,) and the contest kept up until twenty-six rounds were expended.

"The commanding officer now dashed into the rear, and found Maj. Chapin and a parcel of his men around the wagons. 'For God's sake, Major, do something; you do not fight your men, then take them and furnish mine with ammunition, and carry off the wounded to the wagons, that I may not be compelled to take men for this purpose out of my ranks.'

"Major Chapin appeared shortly after this in the rear of the line, with a keg of cartridges on his horse; he called a soldier, handed it over and resumed his station in the *hollow*. This was the whole of his exertion, and the only time he appeared on the battle-ground during three hours; this is the man who, in an official document, was called 'the brave Major Chapin.' The commanding officer now directed men to be detached from each company to carry off the wounded, and get a supply of cartridges; which being effected, (the contest still continuing) Captain McDowell was directed to limber his pieces, and proceed with the wagons, on which were loaded the wounded, under the escort of a company of infantry, to a position about a quarter of a mile to the right, and somewhat to the rear. The object of this movement was, if possible, to get round the piece of woods on our right occupied by the enemy, and so regain the main road, and commence a retreat, which secured the only resource to save the detachment.

"Having arrived on the ground spoken of, the troops were formed into close column; but from the killed, wounded and skulking, our number seemed much reduced. They had marched eleven miles that morning without refreshment; they had fought three hours, the weather very warm, and consequently the troops were much exhausted. The commanding officer thought of ordering them a ration of whiskey, but some Indians getting in our rear, and commencing a fire, there was not time; and the commanding officer informed his troops that as the enemy were seen constantly to cross the road on which we were then formed within long shot of them, his intention was to wait a little longer until the enemy's principal force had passed, then to rush on him with a desperate charge, and if possible to gain the main road and retreat. He encouraged his troops to be resolute; these were the only means in our power, as the enemy were constantly gathering strength, and we losing; added to that, the ammunition low, and but three cartridges of grape left for the field-pieces.

"At this juncture, Lieutenant-Fitzgibbon arrived from the enemy with a flag of truce; Captain McDowell was sent to receive him. Fitzgibbon stated that we were far outnumbered; that we could not possibly escape, and that they had a number of Indians from the north-west, by no means as easily controlled as those from the vicinity, and having suffered very severely, they were outrageous, and would commence a general massacre; he was, therefore, desirous to save the effusion of blood, and demanded a surrender. He was told, that we knew how to die, and they should hear from us in a few minutes. He returned very shortly, repeating the summons, and added, that if we did not believe we were

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outnumbered, and could not possibly escape, an officer would be permitted to view their troops. Lieutenant Godwin was sent, and arriving at the head of the lane where a part of their force was stationed, Colonel De Herrn ordered him back, saying, this was too humiliating to be permitted. On his return, the commanding officer asked those under his command, what was to be done? The second in command observed, he was willing to do any thing, (in other words, to give no opinion.) The commanding officer said, he did not ask the opinion of his officers, or wish them to bear any share of the blame that might attach; he was commanding officer, and, therefore, would take all the responsibility; he only wished to know their view of our situation. Some of them observed, they did not think it possible, with such a force around us, the exhausted state of our men, and seventeen miles to retreat, the road running principally through woods, that one fourth of us could escape death. As we must retreat in regular order along the road, while the immense number of Indians would constantly hang on our flanks and rear, and shoot us down at pleasure, without our being enabled to injure them, more especially when our few remaining cartridges should be expended. This coinciding with the opinion of the commanding officer, Captain McDowell was directed to obtain the best terms he could, which consisted in permitting the officers to retain their side-arms and horses, the militia to return home on parole, and the detachment to surrender prisoners of war.

"Thus terminated one of the most unfortunate and impolitic expeditions that ever was planned. Five hundred men were risked to batter down with a twelve and six pounder, Decoo's stone house, said to be fortified and garrisoned with a company of regulars and sixty to one hundred Indians, to capture or dislodge the enemy, and return by the way of St. David's and Queenston."

"This intelligence was derived from a source decided not entitled to confidence, having long previous to this been known by many for an unblushing liar; besides, had not been within several miles of the post to be attacked, of the strength of which he undertook to give a particular detail."

With regard to the Beaver Dam expedition, about which so many misrepresentations have been made, I have to say, that a short time before the expedition ordered out, General Dearborn, who then commanded at Fort George, sent for me to his quarters, and told me what the expedition was determined on, and that the command of it was to be given to Colonel Bærstler, and that I and my corps were to form part of it, and that from my knowledge of the country, &c., much advantage to the expedition was expected from us. I had nothing to say against the expedition, nor against myself and men making part of it, only that we were continually on some fatiguing jaunt or other, and were almost worn down. But I did suggest to the General the expediency of giving the command either to Cols. Miller, Scott, or Christee, telling him that Colonel B. had not, in my opinion, the necessary skill for such a command. He did not manifest any offence at my freedom, but told me that Col. B. complained of being ill-treated as to separate commands, and that he believed himself competent to this one. I, of course, submitted. All the transactions in that affair were of course known both to our own people and the British, so that any attempt to impose on the public by any partial or cunning statement would be foolish and absurd.

Two days before the battle I was ordered out to reconnoitre the enemy, and was directed to go beyond the Beaver Dams. I did so, and on my return into the neighborhood of the Dams, I made a halt of about an hour, and took one or two prisoners. I returned down through Lundy's Lane, where in the time of a short halt which I made there, I lost one man who was taken prisoner, which happened in this way. While my party was halted we were attacked by that wiley officer, Fitzgibbon. We soon beat off Fitzgibbon's party and routed them, but making a rapid movement to save my men, one of them who was more slack than his fellows, by his own negligence or indolence was taken prisoner. I returned to the Fort and made my report to Gen. Dearborn. In this report I said nothing of a party of the British fortifying Decoo's house; because when I passed that house there was no fortifying nor any thing like it going on there; nor was a British officer or soldier to be seen there. Next day I was informed that there were a number fortifying at Decoo's house. I told him I did not believe it, for that there were certainly no troops there when I was at the spot. I have no doubt, however, that his information was not altogether incorrect, for it afterwards appeared that after I left the place Captain Fitzgibbon came there with his company, and staid a short time.

An exaggerated account of Fitzgibbon's operations determined General Dearborn to send out a party to dislodge him. On his requiring me to go, with part of my men, on this service, I asked him who was to command? He said Col. Bœrstler; and then it was that I objected to Colonel Bœrstler having the command; and I did then tell the General that Scott, Christie, or Miller, were, either of them, better qualified for such a command than Colonel Bœrstler. The General replied that Bœrstler complained that he had not had an opportunity to distinguish himself, and that he claimed the command of that party as his right. I told him that I suspected his determination in this matter could neither satisfy Bœrstler nor any of us. He then said with some warmth, "How is this, sir? You can go farther into the country than I now propose to send you, and return safely with the men you take out; and now I propose to send you out in a strong party of 500 infantry and two pieces of artillery, you start at difficulties, and raise objections." I said that the largeness of the corps he proposed to send out was what I objected to; because it would only hamper our operations. I told him that as my corps

consisted wholly of mounted riflemen, we could quickly beat up the enemies quarters, from some distance; and having pursued our advantage as far as circumstances appeared to warrant—or if we were not fortunate enough to gain any advantage, we could be off and leave them in a moment. But with such a force as he proposed to send, it would be far otherwise. That such a body of men could proceed but very little way into the country from the Fort without being observed by the enemy—that within four hours they could collect at any point within a march of that length, 500 regulars and seven hundred Indians, &c., beside three or four hundred militia. My remonstrances however, were of no use. I was ordered to go out under Colonel Bærstler's command, taking with me such men as I could furnish with horses and equipments for the expedition. I repaired to my cantonment, paraded, and selected my men, and marched them down to the camp, without calling on Colonel Bærstler. Soon after my arrival, Colonel Bærstler appeared with his artillery and infantry. General Dearborn came out to us and gave us our orders. I was directed by the General, to keep in the rear, as a guard to the troops in advance. When we had got about two miles from the Fort, the troops were halted, and I was ordered in advance. We proceeded to Queenston where we halted for the night; and I was immediately ordered to the farthest part of the town to establish such pickets and send out such patrols as I might think sufficient to protect the detachment from surprise. Early in the morning we marched from Queenston. I then remarked to Colonel Bærstler that, by that time the enemy must be apprised of our being out from the Fort, and that we might expect before long, to hear from Fitzgibbon. The Colonel asked how many men Fitzgibbon had? My answer was, that "he had some regular troops, some Indians, and some militia." "Very well, then, (said he,) let me meet him, that I may lay my sword hilt to hilt with his." After we had marched about three miles my flankers shot two Indians.—The Colonel, hearing the report of the pieces, ordered the detachment to halt, and sent for me to come toward him. As I met him he asked what that firing was for? I told him; and he ordered us to march on again. We did so, and as we approached St. David's, (which is about four miles from Queenston,) I saw several British officers come out of the houses. They looked at us for a moment; then fired the alarm—sounded the bugle, and made off with good speed.

We soon heard the alarm guns, at the several cantonments in the neighborhood. I was again called back, and enquired of by the commanding officer, what all this meant? I told him it was an alarm given to the different cantonments, and that by observing the different alarms, he might judge of their relative positions. He then ordered me forward, and we proceeded on the march. We had not got far beyond St. David's when he sent for me again, and enquired of me what the country was above the mountains? I informed him that it was an open, level country. He then said, "This road is so interrupted with ravines, and there is so much thick woods, that it is favorable for the Indians to attack us: can we not get up the mountain?" I informed him, that about a mile ahead, there was a good pass up the mountain. (So this height is universally called by the Canadians.) By his direction, I led the way up this pass. Upon gaining the top of the mountain we were halted for some time. After resuming the march, and proceeding about a mile, I saw, an open field, in some open woods, a number of Indians running to a point of thick woods that lay on each side of our road. As I had been ambushed at the same place but a few days before, I immediately saw their object, and went back to the Colonel and informed him of it. He hastily, and as it then appeared to me in some confusion of mind, ordered me to advance with my party, and to keep *at least half a mile* in advance. I advanced, and while I was doing so, prepared my men for the attack. We, however, were suffered to pass. So were the Colonel and his men, until his rear guard came into the pass, when they were fired upon. On hearing the fire, I halted, and wheeled to the right about, and rode back full speed towards the main body. When I had got about half way I met Colonel Bœrstler alone, at full speed, come, as it seemed, to inform me that there was an attack. I told him I understood it, and continued my course until I got near the main body, when I was fired upon. I immediately wheeled my men directly upon the enemy. They retreated, and we pursued them probably five hundred in number, through the woods. They were running from us, and we making all pursuit that could be, when we were overtaken by a messenger from Colonel Bœrstler and ordered back. I obeyed the order, but as soon as I came to Colonel Bœrstler I remonstrated against it, and told, (what every body ought to know,) that the Indians, when once routed, were a harmless enemy, especially if well pursued. He said they were not all gone;

and I pretty soon perceived about two hundred that had separated from their main body, and were hanging about upon the right of our army, and keeping up the fire. I told him these might soon be dispersed. As I was in the act of turning from him, he ordered me not to leave the field. We, however, rode briskly to the fence, giving the enemy at the same time, a good fire; and one or two of our men, by my direction, dismounted and threw down the fence. The Indians ran off. I again returned to the Colonel and told him it appeared to me, that we were playing a useless game, that we were losing men without an object. I urged that we should go on, and accomplish the order, telling him that when we had done that we should be ready to act as circumstances might require. During this conversation there was no firing.

The Colonel then said to me, "Go to your station and keep a good look out." I rode back accordingly; my officers asked me what we were to do? I told them I had no orders. After remaining in this state fifteen or twenty minutes, the Indians again commenced firing upon us. Soon after this firing began the Colonel sent for me and said, "There (pointing to a thicket of bushes) are some British officers, and some men stationed, can you not dislodge them?" On my replying that I presumed I could, he said, "Well, do it then." I then selected a few of the best sharp-shooters in my corps, and directed them up a ravine to a place where under cover of some bushes, they fired upon the party pointed out by the Colonel, and dislodged them. Soon after this, there was more firing from the Indians, when the Colonel called me, and ordered me to select some proper position for the artillery in our rear; and to order them on to it. About thirty rods in our rear was a ridge of ground, upon which I ordered the pieces to be taken; and placed one of them on the right, the other on the left; and then informed the Colonel his order was obeyed. He said, "Well, I shall retire with my men back of the artillery—you will remain till further orders; but you are not to pursue the enemy out of the field." I charged through the field, and made a feint of going into the woods, upon this, the Indians ran. I was very soon ordered back to the Colonel, whose first words to me were, "What is now to be done?" I advised that we should accomplish the order, or return to the post; saying it was neither politic nor soldier-like to remain there playing hide and seek with the Indians. His mind appeared to be in great perturbation, and he hesitated

what to do. While thus situated, I saw Captain Fitzgibbon approaching us with a flag. I could not conceive what the object might be. "What, (says the Colonel,) is there a flag—what do they want?" I said I could not imagine—that the country was open behind them—that they could run away—that there was no officer killed, nor any prisoner of distinction taken that I knew of. But, the flag soon arrived, and the question was solved. Captain Fitzgibbon demanded of Colonel Boerstler a surrender of himself and the troops composing the party. I was called up and informed of the demand. I replied that we could not think of surrendering for two or three hours yet—not until the enemy had time to call in more men from their cantonment, as there was not enough to form a respectable guard—that I should be mortified to be marched through the country by such an inferior force. Fitzgibbon declared he could show us double our numbers. I replied, not within four hours. He then, addressing the Colonel, said, "You must determine soon for the Indians are very unmanageable, and I shall be obliged to let them loose upon you. At this declaration the Colonel became alarmed exceedingly, and said, "For God's sake keep the Indians from us!" I then turned to my men and communicated to them my orders, that they should be ready for a charge as soon as the flag should be dismissed. On overhearing some of the talk between our Colonel and the Captain I spoke to the Colonel and told him, that he could do as he pleased, but as for me and my men, we were a distinct corps, and could do as we pleased. I requested him aside; and told him (and that very truly) that he might safely take his men through the large farms on our right, which would secure him from the Indians; and that I could remain on the field, and keep the enemy in check till he could return to the Fort. At this time Fitzgibbon turned toward us, and said, "You must determine immediately—I cannot be dallied with. You, Major Chapin, and your men shall be paroled, and suffered to go home." The Colonel said, "We will surrender." Immediately I rode up to my wounded, fifteen in number (most of whom were in the care of two well men each,) and told them to mount out their road, told them to ride off, and to ride as fast as the wounded could bear; and to go directly to the General's quarters and report to him all they knew of the affair. As they rode off, I returned to the Colonel. By this time, several British officers had come up, and the Colonel now very peremptorily ordered me to surrender. I answered,

"I obey." "Then, sir," said he, "attend to seeing how the articles of capitulation are drawn." The 4th article allowed me and my men to be paroled and sent home; but we were retained until we could be marched to General Vincent's quarters at 40 mile creek. When we arrived there, I was informed by the British officers that I was to be detained; and that my Colonel had agreed that the 4th article should be expunged. As soon as I could obtain permission to see the Colonel, I demanded of him to know if he had consented to expunge the 4th article, and if so, what could have induced him to take such a step. He replied that I had sent off forty of my men, without his orders, with their horses and rifles, after he had agreed to surrender; that this made the Indians very restless and uneasy, and that if I was suffered to go with my men, he and his men would be massacred, and that it was for their safety that I was to be detained. Colonel Bœrstler and his men were ordered to march, but my men and I were kept under a strong guard.

While my men were in the guard-house, I obtained permission to go in and see them, alledging that some of them were unwell. I advised six of them to run away, and shewed them how they could do it with safety, by pointing out to them an unusual and somewhat difficult pass up the mountain, and by instructing them how to escape the sentinel. They succeeded in making their escape.

Five days after we were ordered to Burlington heights, as it was said, for our better security; and there we were kept two weeks. During this time, I twice had leave to go into the guard-house for the purpose of making such medical prescriptions for my men as their conditions might require. At each of these times I directed several men how to escape, and they accomplished it. Soon after the last time, the British Colonel Evans called on me, and said to me, in a hasty and irritated manner, "How is this sir! every time you go to see your men some of them run away." I coolly observed to him, "They don't like to stay here—they are not so well used here as they are at home." "Well, sir," said he, "you will be moved from here to-morrow morning for Quebec, and from there I presume, sent to England. I told him it would be a pleasant trip, for in that case I should have an opportunity to view that Island before the close of the war, and perhaps take the tour of Europe. He left me rather unceremoniously.

The next morning we were commanded to embark on board two boats—bateaux. I was ordered into one of them with the principal part of the guard. My men, among whom was Capt. Sackrider were placed in the other boat with a smaller guard. Orders were given to the Captain of the boat I was placed in, to keep his boat four rods ahead of the other. Like orders were given to the other boat's commander, who was a Sergeant, to keep his boat four rods astern of the other. Afterwards, in pursuance of this order, we started from Burlington Heights, and kept it until we had run through the small lake, and had also passed a fleet of boats coming up the lake; then, seeing the coast clear, I made a signal to Capt. Sackrider. Our own men were rowing the hinder boat, and he whispered to them to increase their speed; while I was endeavoring to delude our Captain by diverting him with an interesting story. Somewhat surprised at seeing them just under his stern, our Captain ordered them back. I threw out some slight remark by way of excuse for their being so near, but as they kept their place he again very loudly ordered them to fall back. I then loudly, and with all the firmness I could muster, commanded them not to fall back an inch, but to do their duty, at the same time assuring Captain Showers that I commanded the party. He attempted to draw his sword while some of his soldiers made thrusts at me with their bayonets. Instead of drawing his sword, however, he, by some means, just then, fell into the bottom of the boat. Two of his men, in making a thrust at me, with their bayonets, fell atop of him. They then being in such an awkward position, I stepped upon them; in the mean time, my men rushed, from their boat to that of the Captain's. While this was occurring, Captain Hammond, of my corps, seized the guard of the other boat. All things becoming quiet, I distributed the men equally, in the two boats. I succeeded to the command of our fleet of two bateaux, with no little alacrity: our men, too, felt their condition vastly improved; we shifted our course—crossed Lake Ontario, and with the boats and prisoners, arrived the next morning, safe, at Fort Niagara.

The above is a faithful and true account of the Beaver Dam affair, as it is also of the consequences of that affair so far as I was involved in them. It may well be believed that my memory was so much impressed by them as to enable me, even at this distance of time, to

be particular in my statement. Besides, the facts were all notorious throughout that part of the army and country, and numbers are yet living who witnessed them.

Seeing that General Armstrong professes a willingness to correct any mistake, and is so candid as to admit that it is the duty of an historian to state what he knows to be facts, however he may have come by his knowledge, I take the liberty of suggesting to him the propriety of adopting some measure to ascertain whether in the course of the last war, the Secretary at War did actually send to the Niagara lines and Oswego, guns, and balls unfit for the caliber of such guns? and whether he sent to Oswego, and some place farther down, balls too small for any pieces there? and whether, on being informed of his mistake, he ordered the brig Oneida to go to the Oneida furnace and get balls of the proper sizes, and carry them to the proper places? also, whether the Oneida furnace was situated upon or near any navigable water? Further—whether he did actually send tent poles from Baltimore and Philadelphia to Buffalo? (the country round which, at that time, was covered with timber of all sizes.) Further, whether, when our army was lying at Sackett's Harbor, he directed General Brown to give notice that the army would march to the west, and attack Kingston upon the north side of Lake Ontario? Whether the Secretary did, the very next week, give positive orders to General Brown to move the army to Fort Niagara? and whether, when in pursuit of these orders, the General had himself arrived at Buffalo, he received a letter from the Secretary, informing him that he had mistaken the order, which the Secretary said, was intended for a "camping in," though he had not expressly stated it to be so? Whether upon this, General Brown returned to Sackett's Harbor? and whether, upon his return, he received from the Secretary at War, another order to move the army to the Niagara Frontier? and whether by orders and counter-orders, of the Secretary, to General Brown, the army under his command, was or was not, kept marching and counter-marching for six weeks to and from Oswego and the Niagara Frontier, thereby kept in a constant state of toil, and harassed beyond endurance, was the effect of "wanting good faith to the Government, or the ignorance of the Secretary?" Also, whether the Secretary ordered General Wilkinson to go to Montreal late in the fall to winter, leaving Kingston, Prescott, and several smaller places behind him? and

what were the consequences of this movement? Was there not a project on foot, to invade Montreal, the direction of which, was assigned to General Wilkinson? Did not he and his officers remonstrate against it and give as a reason, the following, that the capture of Kingston would secure the Upper Province and Lakes? Whether or not the army at Kingston was not improvidently left, too weak, to be defended, with any chance of success? Whether the enterprize, of carrying Kingston, was or was not practicable, with the force and supplies, then under the control of Wilkinson? Whether that would have the effect, intended by a reduction of Montreal, by securing the Upper Province and Lakes. On the contrary, could you be ignorant of the fact, that Montreal had no fort, that could contain our troops? Did you not know that the enemy could run by us, at night, and attack us in the rear? Was it not obvious, to any man of sense, that by securing Kingston, our army might be much easier supported, by remaining nearer home, in a more favorable climate, in which case the boats and supplies could proceed down the river in the spring, before any reinforcements could arrive, to aid the enemy? Were not your orders just the reverse of what they ought to have been, by your not having a correct knowledge of the country, and not pursuing the safer dictates of prudence or sound judgment, whereby a complete failure was the consequence? Was not another of your favorite plans, an ill-advised measure, by sending Hampton through the woods to Montreal, in conjunction with Wilkinson, two men as perfectly odious to each other, as their skill could render them, to make complete the failure already begun, thereby finishing the climax of disgrace, in that campaign? After having appeared on the lines, to superintend the operations of his subordinates, and to aid them by "the counsels of his will," the Secretary returned to the Seat of Government, to put the capitol, and its environs, into a posture of defence, impregnable to the British lion, and to achieve immortal renown, by the wisdom of his measures, and the prowess of his "own right arm." The note of preparation was trilled on every breeze. The public stood aghast at the prospect of two powerful nations, having met in mortal combat. Expectation raised to the highest pitch. The British legions disembarking—more than double the force necessary to defend the capitol, ordered into the field by the Secretary. When lo! and behold, at the first onset by the British troops, the Secretary, after having performed some

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antic flourishes, gave back, leaving the brunt to Commodore Barney, who repulsed the assailants a number of times, while the doughty Secretary, found security in flight, leaving his officers and men to hew their road to glory, as best they could. At this critical juncture, giving peremptory orders to General Winder to retreat, with his men, while the brave Commodore was left unaided by the Secretary or any competent force. The enemy followed up the retreat, until arriving at the turnpike gate, they were visited by the old lady that kept the toll-gate, and were refused a passage, until the toll should be paid, which delay enabled the Secretary, by the light of the capitol, to make good his escape. Is not the eminence on which stands the Capitol of the United States, sufficiently elevated, to have been successfully defended, by one eighth of the force the Secretary then had under his immediate control? Was not the President's house in a position to have been defended with a small portion of the force, then at the disposition of the Secretary? Why were those advantages neglected? and why did the Secretary leave the same abandoned, to a hostile foe? Was it for "the want of good faith to the Government, or the effect of ignorance and cowardice?"

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,

*And particularly to the Officers and men engaged during the late
War, upon the Niagara Frontier.*

In consequence of a most unexpected, ridiculous, and libellous publication, relative to your conduct and characters, as men and as officers, and particularly to myself, which has been brought forth by *John Armstrong*, I feel myself obligated to call your attention to it, and publicly to make an exhibit of such facts within my knowledge, as well as that of many others, as may tend to correct and to place in their proper light, some at least of the many false, degrading and ridiculous statements of this professed historian.

Why, we all ask, should this John Armstrong, now, at this late day, give publicity to such statements, even if they were true? He says at page 162, of his "Historical Notices of the War of 1812," that "Boerstler's detailed account of his misfortunes, has never, so far as we know, been given to the public. It is perhaps due to his memory, that it should *now* be published: the reader will find it in the Appendix, No. 24. See page 250 of his Appendix, vol. I.

Again, in his letter to me, and which I had the honor to receive from him, a few days since, dated "Red Hook, 22d May, 1836;"— "The narrative of the late Colonel Boerstler was intended as a defense against certain statements, to be found in General Dearborn's official letter in relation to the unfortunate expedition made to the Beaver Dams, in the campaign of 1813—which the writer believed to have been derived from you! The narrative, when received at the war office, was accompanied by a request that it should be published in the National Intelligencer, inasmuch as the General had omitted to send his (Colonel Boerstler's) report of the expedition, which ought to have accompanied the General's statement, which was published in that journal. Notwithstanding the force and plainness of this appeal, the request was not granted, from a belief that under existing circumstances, the publication of the narrative was not likely to do good; and by keeping up old quarrels, or generating new ones, might do harm."

Granted the fact that such a narrative was written—sent to the war office, with such a request, and the publication at the time, and for the reasons given by John Armstrong, was not made or permitted, by the officers of the department—all of which may be doubted; but I am not at all willing to admit the same—we may well and confidently ask—whether such circumstances have passed away, or have so altered as to render them evils, then anticipated, less probable, less annoying, or less degrading to those whose characters as men and as citizens, were implicated, libelled, and attempted to be disgraced and disgrimed?

But that is dead—purer to his memory—why disturb the ashes or the characters of the *dead*? John Armstrong, probably, as well as those and others, Americans, may have read or heard in the histories of the European Monarchies, of posthumous, forfeitures, and attainders, not of property only, but of titles and characters. But where, I ask, is there an American citizen, an officer or soldier, who

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was engaged in that war, upon the Niagara Frontier, who would not view with detestation and abhorrence, and who would not at once lift his hand, and if necessary, oppose by force, the officer or the man, who should propose or attempt the introduction of such laws, usages or proceedings, in these United States!—There is not one!

Were the statements made by Mr. Armstrong in his "notices of the war," relevant to *me—to my conduct and character only*, I should at once have called him to account to me personally, and to me only. They are not. They are of that character which demands the attention of the public—of all our citizens, and more particularly of those officers now living, and the friends of those who are not, with whose names and conduct he has connected occurrences, and mentioned transactions and names, in such a manner, and in such language, as to render either their characters ridiculous, or unworthy of respect, confidence, or trust, or otherwise, his own infamous.

The following extracts from his "Notices," are specimens of his language, respecting some men who were good officers, and who well and faithfully did their duty to their country. They will show abundantly, without reference to others, the asperity, if not the misanthropy of his feelings, or of the most profound ignorance of the occurrences of which he now professes to be the candid and well-informed historian.

Page 116 of "Notices of the War of 1812;"—*"Remarks."*—The errors which signalize the close of this campaign in the north, are numerous and striking. Those of DEARBORN and SMYTH appear to have been the result of constitutional *defects, barrenness, or inactivity* of *mind* in the one, and infirmity of purpose in the other; while those of VAN RENSSALAER were obvious by *sins of ignorance*—the offspring of that deficient knowledge which every man must feel, who for the first time, and without any previous instructions, finds himself at the head of an army, and on the eve of a battle. Of the former, any new illustration would be unnecessary, as they have been already sufficiently indicated; while of the latter, a special but brief notice may be useful."

Page 79.—*"Remarks."*—Of the many errors which signalize this expedition, the first in date, as well as in character, was the plan of the campaign suggested by the Government and pursued by the General, and which differed but little from that prescribed to Hull, with respect to route, object and means."

Page 160.—*Suggestion 4th.*—The next blunder in this Comedy of Errors, must be ascribed to Burns, on whom the command of the army had devolved, in consequence of the capture of Chandler and Winder."

Page 161.—"5th.—But little more mismanagement was now wanting to make the campaign of 1813 as much a subject of ridicule at home, and contempt abroad, as that of the preceding year. Nor had we long to wait for such instances of *misconduct* as could not fail to produce this *degrading effect*. On the 6th of June—the day on which Burns was *flying* when *none pursued*, an order was received from the Commander-in-Chief, recalling, without loss of time, the whole army to Fort George—virtually abandoning all the objects of the campaign. Nor was even this ill-judged movement executed without a disorder which entailed upon it the loss of the twelve boats, principally laden with the baggage of the army." "These events were soon known and justly appreciated by the British Commander, &c."

It surely is not my intention to give greater publicity to the late labors of John Armstrong, or to spend more words in calling your attention to the ridiculous and disgraceful conduct of himself and of some other would-be-great-men, than may be necessary to a full and correct understanding of the whole matter. It may require several extracts from his "Notices of the War of 1812," in order to understand and fully to appreciate *his* conduct and character. The same remark is applicable to some others, whose names and characters were subjects of notoriety during the war, and of whom he has spoken frequently and familiarly.

The well-known Van Rensselaers are abundantly able, and well qualified, and from late appearances, willing, not only to defend themselves and their own characters from the libels of John Armstrong, but to have their conduct placed properly and truly before the people and their posterity. His allegations "of the sins of ignorance—the offspring of that deficient knowledge," &c., will doubtless be by their notice regarded, so far as the author is concerned, with the real contempt and derision they so richly merit.

In his letter to me of the 22d of May last, which I have before mentioned, this John Armstrong threatens me with an expose of General McClure's communication to the War Department, of the 25th October, 1813. Of such a communication I had heard some-

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thing—nothing definite; but having never been able to find it, after great exertions, and knowing the character of the man, I had long since abandoned the subject, considering any defence useless and unnecessary, coming as the communication did, from such a source, so polluted with envy, malice and proverbial cowardice. This man did nothing in the course of the war, as an officer, except what tended to degrade or destroy his own character, and to disgrace the army, the government, and indeed the nation.

After Gen. Wilkinson left the frontier army, Colonel Scott had command of the Fort with five hundred men. To him, with whom, and under whose orders I served, I can with confidence, and, if necessary shall, appeal for full evidence of my character as an officer, and of my conduct to and with the enemy, and also our own men. At present, I will state one transaction in which I was personally engaged, of the truth of which, General Scott was cognizant, and to which he will at any time bear evidence.

While in the possession and command of the Fort, Colonel Scott directed me to do all that I could to annoy the enemy, at every point. They were then four miles from the Fort, and commanded by Generals Vincent and De Rottenburg. Our situation being deemed critical, I, with my three hundred men, left the Fort, early in the day—attacked the enemy, drove in their pickets—beat their whole force up to their quarters, and then returned with a large number of prisoners—more prisoners than I had men with me. Soon after, the enemy followed me into town. It was then proposed by Colonel Scott to open the Batteries of the Fort upon them. To this I objected. The Fort not being tenable, as a short time before, we had commenced enlarging it, and a number of passes were left open, without breast works or other impediments to oppose the approach or repel the attack of the enemy; and, therefore, advised to attack them upon their own ground, and outside of the Fort.

Thereupon, agreeably to Colonel Scott's directions, I led out seventy men, attacked the enemy in the rear part of the town, and drove him back; we were engaged till dark. I then returned with about three hundred prisoners to the Fort. This was, at the time, known and spoken of as a prompt movement, and a most brilliant affair.

An account of this operation, is said to have been published by General McClure, as a work of his own, and that credit is given by

him to several of his officers, for the gallantry and efficiency of their attack and repulse of the enemy. But unfortunately for himself, and those officers, and their fame and credit to be emblazoned by this historian, John Armstrong, General McClure and his officers were *not at that time in Canada*—they were on the other side of the river!

Soon after this repulse and defeat of the British army, General McClure crossed the river to the Fort, and assumed the command. He ordered Colonel Scott to leave the Fort with a detachment of men, and attack the enemy in his encampment. He declined, for good reasons. McClure then ordered me, with Colonels Dobbins and Hopkins, and their regiments, to follow the enemy; we arrived at their breastworks, but expecting, from appearances, that we were to be drawn into ambush, I took a small detachment, and advanced upon their intrenchments. They fired upon us, and at once retreated to their main body, at the Twelve Mile Creek, and Colonels Dobbins and Hopkins, with their regiments, had returned to the Fort. I then sent back Captain Sackrider, to General McClure, requesting him to send me one hundred men, with whose assistance and co-operation, we should be able to take, disperse or destroy the enemy. The General detained Sackrider. He, well knowing the importance of this message to the General, and of our critical situation where we were, soon escaped and came to me. I then, with what force we had, went in pursuit of the enemy; they were retreating, and had set fire to all the property—among which was a large quantity of flour, at that time, very valuable, and in great demand, together with a large amount of goods, to prevent their falling into our hands. I immediately ordered the fires to be extinguished, and thereby saved the property not already destroyed, for the use of the Canadians, or for our soldiers or citizens.

We then followed the enemy in their retreat, to the Twenty Mile Creek—there again attacked them; they fled rapidly, and in utter confusion. There were then with me but few men, but they did their duty. We took a number of prisoners, and I sent them back to the Fort. While engaged in this pursuit of the enemy, I received orders by express, from General McClure, to return to him at the Twelve Mile Creek. I obeyed, and returned to him, made a full report. To my utter surprise, the General appeared much pleased and gratified. He then said, "I'll now make a dash at the enemy,"

"I'll make a dash at them." I left him in this humor. About dark he came to me and said—"will they not get around us—cut off our retreat, take us," &c. I left him and went to sleep, then rising, with all my men, greatly fatigued. He soon awoke me, and ordered me to go out and reconnoitre. I objected; stated that I was fatigued, and that he must send a Lieutenant, or some other officer. He insisted that I should go—that he would furnish me men, and I "must immediately make a *dash at them*." He gave me *two men only*; with them I went on, took one of the sentinels and sent him, with *one* of my *two men*, to General McClure. We then went on to a house, obtained all the information I could—returned safely to him, and upon his inquiry I referred him to the sentinel then in his custody, for information. He then ordered me on the advance guard. When we had proceeded about five miles, he again asked me if the enemy might not be yet behind us, and told me—"You and your men *will go on*. Just before our arrival at the Twenty Mile Creek, we heard a firing in our rear. Supposing the enemy was then engaged with the General and the men, we immediately returned, and found our people shooting the cows, sheep, ducks and poultry of the Canadian farmers. This scene of new fashion warfaro, was by us all viewed with surprise and indignation. I personally made every exertion in my power to stay the carnage of the brute creation—representing to our men that we were there to fight the enemy—the British soldiers and officers—not to kill their beasts nor to waste or destroy the property of the inhabitants and farmers. General P. B. Porter was in the rear of General McClure, and his veteran soldiers. He remonstrated—deprecating the murder of the brutes, and ultimately, the carnage was stayed. The women came amongst us, and to their prayers, rising of three hundred cows were yielded up to them.

In our progress, we discovered a private house in flames; it was Landy's house, his wife was there, praying and beseeching that the house and property might be spared.

In our progress towards Chippewa, we saw General McClure coming from Forsyth's, with a bottle of liquor under each of his arms. At Chippewa, I found the family of Mr. Macklem sick, and at his request, I advised with them as their physician. From that place, I wrote back to Colonel Scott, by Mr. Sackrider, on the subject of carrying the private property of the Canadian citizens across

the river as plunder. He immediately stopped the boats, and the transmission of the property.

On my return from Chippewa to the Fort, I found General McClure and some of our people, at Queenston, firing cannons and rejoicing for McClure's victory. I did not stay with them to rejoice, but proceeded to the Fort. Soon after, he returned to the Fort also; and there, in the presence of Colonel Scott, he inquired of me why I had not waited at the rejoicing at Queenston? I replied to him that it was then the anniversary of our defeat at Queenston—that nothing new had transpired to my knowledge to require or excite rejoicing. That ravaging the country, burning houses, shooting the cattle and poultry of the enemy, was not a matter of rejoicing—and that these were all he had effected by his *dash* at the enemy. At the intercession and request of Scott, I said no more to McClure at the time—went to the place where the cows and cattle were kept, cut the ropes with which they were secured, and had them driven back into the country, and the owners obtained them.

As to all these statements and facts, there are now living and credible witnesses, and their testimony will be procured and published or used in case circumstances require it. One word more at this time relative to General McClure. Some years since he was in this city, at the Eagle Tavern; I saw him and distinctly accused him of *misrepresenting* me, my character and my conduct *during the war*. He, *poor man*, then, in the presence of one or more good citizens, stated and confessed that at *that time* he was crazy, that he did not know what did then take place, and that he had now just lost a son, &c. &c. Upon such confessions and his late severe affliction, I abandoned the subject and left him to his own *reflections*.

In order to a full understanding of the facts, and a due appreciation of their importance, I deem it necessary to incorporate with them the following extracts from John Armstrong's "Notices of the War," &c.

They are taken from the statement published by him as the work of Lieut. Col. Berstler. This "Narrative" never having been published by Berstler, nor permitted by the War Department or the Government, to see the light, it must now be regarded as the work of John Armstrong. He is answerable for the truth or falsehood contained in it, so far as they may affect the conduct or the character of others, or the history of the war as such. He has assumed

NOTICES OF THE WAR.

to be and appears as the sponsor or god-father of Baerstler's "Narrative."

First, however, as to Mr. Armstrong's remarks upon the conduct of Burns. At page 160, he states, "When at day break this officer was called to exercise his new functions, he found, as he tells us in his official reports, that "all the views of the enemy have been completely frustrated—himself obliged to fly, leaving the field of battle covered with his dead and wounded, and more than forty men, principally of the 49th, made prisoners."

"While, on the other hand, the troops of the United States had suffered little loss, were in perfect order, and entirely in condition, had not both Generals been taken, to have pressed Vincent to a second combat, the issue of which would not have been doubtful. Yet, in spite of all these discoveries, our modest cavalier, (from sheer disaffection in his own capacity to direct infantry movements,) refused to avail himself of the advantages, he possessed, and instead of longer pursuing the objects of the expedition, turned his back at once on *Vincent and Victory*, and hastily returned to Forty Mile Creek. Thus, practically contradicting his own official statements, and giving to the affair of Stony Creek, the new and unmerited character of a positive defeat on our part." This affair Mr. Armstrong in the same page, (160,) calls this "4th, the next blunder in this Comedy of Errors," &c.

At page 150, he says—"5th. But little more mismanagement was now wanting to make the campaign of 1813 as much a subject of ridicule at home, and contempt abroad, as that of the preceding year. Nor had we long to wait for such new instances of misconduct, as could not fail to produce this degrading effect. On the 6th of June, the day on which Burns was flying when none pursued, an order was received from the Commander-in-Chief, re-calling without loss of time, the whole army to Fort George, and virtually abandoning all the objects of the campaign. Nor was even this ill-judged movement executed without a disorder which entailed upon it the loss of twelve boats, principally laden with the baggage of the army. These events were soon known and justly appreciated by the British Commanders, who, advancing as we retreated, was willing on the 20th of the month, to hazard the *elite* of his army, (about five hundred commandants,) within stroke of his adversary."

Page 162. "Every just view of the circumstance indicated the wisdom of immediately assailing this corps; the capture or destruction of which would have effectually defeated the present views of future operations of Vincent. But, unfortunately, though the General adopted this opinion, he altogether failed, as in other cases in the employment of means proper for giving to the experiment a successful issue. Instead of placing, as he ought to have done, Scott and Miller at the head, one thousand five hundred men each, and moving them by a night march, and the shortest route, on De Coos' station, he despatched Bærstler (*an officer not distinguished by any prior service,*) with five hundred and forty effectives only, by the Queenston road, in open day, without reserve or demonstration of any kind, either to sustain the attack, or cover the retreat."

Here we have John Armstrong's veracious statement of the conduct of a General, and of Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler. Of the first, nothing at present need be remarked.

Whatever may have been Bærstler's reputation for veracity, or for military prowess, this historian here assumes and takes the responsibility to publish as truth, his detailed account of his misfortune in this affair. He commences at page 250, his account, as follows:

"On June 23d, 1813, *sot dissant*—Major Chapin called at the tent of Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler, on the plains of Newark, *talked largely* about having *scoured all the country with his forty followers*; that he had been to Beaver Dam, &c. &c. Lieutenant-Bærstler knowing this man to be a *rain, boasting liar*, and *suspecting his fidelity*, from *various circumstances*, amongst which was that of having joined a committee to *remonstrate against the war*, and that of coming forward as spokesman in favor of a man charged by many of his neighbors with *giving intelligence to the enemy*. He was heard by Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler with indifference, and dismissed with coolness."

At page 252, he states:—"At St. David's the Commander discovered that Major Chapin's knowledge of the roads was not to be relied on. He accordingly interrogated several inhabitants, and proceeded several miles, when arriving at a cross road, he demanded of some of Major Chapin's men, where the road led to? they replied, they did not know. "How, not know! were you not here three days ago?" "No, sir; not within several miles as far." The Com-

mander now perceived that the General had been inveigled, to risk this detachment on doubtful intelligence."

Page 253. "Some of the *soi disant* Major Chapin's men now demanded, 'where is our Commander—what are we to do?' The commanding officer looked for him in vain, and replied, 'you have no Commander but myself; turn into the ranks and fight with my men.' Some did so—others found it convenient to join their Commander in the hollow, along side the wagons."

Page 254. After some more detail, he continues:—"The Commanding officer now dashed into the rear, and found Major Chapin and a parcel of his men, around the wagons. 'For God's sake Major, do something—if you do not fight with your men, then take them and furnish mine with ammunition, and carry off the wounded to the wagons, that I may not be compelled to take men for this purpose from my ranks.' Major Chapin appeared shortly after this, in the rear of the lines, with a keg of cartridges on his horse. He called a soldier, handed it over, and resumed his station in the hollow. This was the *whole of his exertion*, and the only time he appeared on the battle-ground during three hours. This is the man who in an official document was called '*the brave Major Chapin.*'"

Pages 255 and '6. "At this juncture, Lieutenant-Fitzgibbon arrived from the enemy with a flag of truce. Captain McDowell was sent to receive him."

After further details, as to his surrender to the enemy, he states:—"Thus terminated one of the most unfortunate and impolitic expeditions that ever was planned. Five hundred men were risked to batter down with a twelve and six pounder, Decoo's stone house, said to be fortified and garrisoned, with a company of regulars, and sixty to one hundred Indians—to capture or discharge the enemy, and return by the way of St. David's and Queenston."

"This intelligence was derived from a source, decided not entitled to confidence, having long previous to this been known by many for an unblushing liar."

The publication of "extracts," though lengthy, was necessary, not only for the reasons before stated, but that it might be generally known, of what, by whom, and in what manner, officers, soldiers, and citizens, had been publicly accused by this historian.

No one can wish to be found, or accused of fighting a shadow.—Armstrong's Notices of the War may be read by, or known to but a

few of the present generation. They were, probably, by him intended for the information of foreigners, and our posterity, some hundreds of years hence. Should his works attract sufficient notice to induce or require a second edition, my statements, and the affidavits and letters which will in due time accompany them, will be considered as appropriate and necessary matters for a *second appendix thereto*. It is always considered necessary that a *CULPRIT* and the evidences of his offences be exhibited, to effect his conviction, as well as to afford a salutary example to others.

Those extracts are taken from John Armstrong's publication of a "Narrative," which he says was written by Baerstler. Even this narrative, as he gives it to the world, has an anomalous appearance. It is without date, place, signature of name, or direction to any one. Should it be a communication or despatch to the War Department, or merely an historical publication, the fact should be so stated, that those who now are, or may hereafter be interested in its authenticity or its truth, may at once be able to know the author, the time of its birth, and where to be found for examination. As it now appears the readers of Armstrong's work, are by him informed and given to understand, as facts, and in detail, that several transactions, during the late war, did take place; the same having been so told by Lieutenant Colonel Baerstler, without the knowledge of the man, the time, plan, or motive of his dictum. Surely this affords a frail foundation for the authentic historian to build his edifice upon.

While writing the last above paragraph, I received from the War Department, a letter, of which the following is a copy:

WAR DEPARTMENT, June 13, 1836.

SIR—I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 6th instant, enclosing one addressed by Mr. Sheldon to you. Mr. Sheldon wishes to know whether a report of Colonel Baerstler's, of May 25, 1811, containing certain statements, which he copies from General Armstrong's recent publication, is on file in this Department.

On referring to General Armstrong's work, I find that the extracts contained in Mr. Sheldon's letter, are portions of an account respecting Colonel Baerstler's unsuccessful expedition to the "Beaver Dams," apparently not written by that officer himself, but for his benefit by some friend; and the date which Mr. Sheldon has given, does not belong to this account, but to a note to the last paragraph, with Colonel Baerstler's name appended to it, which seems to have no immediate connection with the events of the expedition spoken of. In the last paragraph but one, of this same account, I observe that an official statement of Colonel Baerstler, is spoken of; but a charge is at the same time made, that it was never communicated to the War Department; and this seems to be confirmed by the fact that the file do not show that such a document was ever placed there.

Very respectfully your most obedient servant,

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From these facts and circumstances, that Berstler, or some friend, for him, and in his behalf, did, soon after the battle of the Beaver Dams, write some account of the affair, and forward it to the War Department; that it was not placed upon the records or files of the office; that it is not now to be found there, it may well be asked, now, why it was not, and who prevented it?

John Armstrong, in his letter to me of the 22d of May last, states that it was not published at the time, because, "under existing circumstances, it was not likely to do good," &c. &c. Again, in that letter he says—"There can be no doubt that in this decision, the President exercised a discretion necessary appertaining to that office." From this it appears that the President of the United States decided that it should not, or ought not to be filed in the War office. Or was that the order and discretionary decision of John Armstrong? Has he personally detained the narrative for rising of twenty years, with a view now to incorporate it with and publish it as a part of his veracious history?

Now, as to Mr. Armstrong himself: he has personally, or in the borrowed language of Berstler, for which he is accountable to me and to the public, accused me as a man, citizen and officer, of several distinct crimes, offences or tergiversations.

1st. My fidelity to my country is strongly suspected.

Having joined a committee to remonstrate against the war—having come forward as spokesman in favor of a man charged by many of his neighbors with giving intelligence to the enemy.

2d. Of being a vain boasting liar.

3d. Of cowardice or folly. He attempts a ludicrous statement of my having left my men without any commander—of being found after or during the battle in the rear with the wagons, and soon after, again in the rear of the line, with a keg of cartridges on my horse; that I called a soldier, handed it over and resumed my station in the hollow; this was the whole of my exertion, and the only time I appeared on the battle ground for three hours, &c.

Even this *soi disant* Secretary Armstrong, in the same page says—"This is the man who in an official document, was called the brave Major Chapin." I must here pause, to express my obligation to Mr. Armstrong for this *solitary truth*—told by him probably from necessity, though he attempts at a sarcasm.

As the affidavit of Mr. Rouse will now follow, I shall defer further statements and remarks for succeeding pages.

[AFFIDAVIT.]

STATE OF NEW-YORK, }
Eric County, ss. }

James Rouse, of the town of Alabama, county of Genesee, and state aforesaid, being duly sworn, doth depose and say, that he, this deponent, became first acquainted with Colonel Cyrenius Chapin, according to the best of this deponent's recollection, on the 27th or 28th day of May, 1813, at Fort George, in Upper Canada. That on the 23d day of June, of the same year, said Chapin with this deponent and others, as volunteers, were ordered by General Dearborn, under the immediate command of Colonel C. R. Boerstler, to reconnoitre the country, and to advance towards the enemy's line, which was commanded by General Vincent—that in pursuance of such order, from General Dearborn, the said Chapin, with about sixty volunteers, including this deponent, who was then acting Quarter Master Sergeant, of the 25th regiment of infantry, proceeded from Fort George to Queenston—that on the line of march, the flankers of said corps of volunteers, killed two Indians between Queenston and St. David's.—From last mentioned place, said corps went to the Beaver Dams, where they were attacked by the British and Indians, we then being in advance of the main force under said Boerstler. On hearing the fire from the enemy, we turned back towards the main army, and met Boerstler alone, coming upon us at full speed, on horseback, and addressing said Chapin, exclaimed—"Major Chapin, the enemy has attacked us and killed two or three of our men!" We then continued on towards the main body, when we were soon fired at by the Indians, when we wheeled and charged upon the Indians, pursuing them about three-fourths of a mile into the woods, upon which a messenger arrived, bringing orders for said Chapin and his men, to retreat back. Soon after, the British and Indians rallied again, making an attack upon Captain McChesney's company, and breaking his line. Whereupon said Chapin, with the assistance of this deponent, allied his men, drove the enemy into the woods, and charged upon them the second time. The firing then ceased for about one half hour, when the same commenced again, by the enemy, from every quarter, towards our men. Said Chapin was then directed by said Boerstler, to dislodge the red coats, covered by a copse of sumacs and other brush, at which time said Chapin picked about twelve of his best sharp-shooters, and ordered them to proceed cautiously up the ravine, and shoot off the mounted men—upon which, the British immediately retreated, after the first fire, when said Boerstler directed said Chapin to post the artillery on the most eligible ground, to which spot said Boerstler immediately retreated in the rear of Chapin's position; directing Chapin, in no event whatever to quit the station, not even to pursue the enemy, until he, Boerstler, should give further orders; thereby leaving said Chapin and his volunteers, to take the whole brunt and raze of the enemy's fire. Some time after, said Boerstler ordered said Chapin to retreat with his (Chapin's) men. Immediately thereafter, Captain Fitzgibbon, of the British army, came with a flag of truce, and demanded the surrender of said Boerstler; upon such demand being made, said Boerstler sent for said Chapin, in, to confer with him on the subject; when it was resolved not to surrender. Said Chapin then returned back to the volunteers, who inquired whether the demand was complied with; to which said Chapin replied, with a good deal of wariness, that it was not. Soon after, said Boerstler sent for said Chapin again, and told said Chapin that he (the said Chapin) must surrender, or the Indians would massacre the whole of us, inasmuch as he, Boerstler, had given all into the Indians' hands. To which said Chapin replied, that if he, Boerstler, wished to surrender, he might; but that he Chapin wished to be considered as belonging to another corps; that he (Chapin) and his men were willing to cut their way through the enemy's line, at the risk of their lives, or perish in the attempt—; that said Chapin strongly remonstrated against such surrender; that said

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Berstler's orders were peremptory; that said Chapin and his men should comply; to which said Chapin submitted with great reluctance; that said Chapin sent home fifteen of his wounded men, with a guard sufficient to protect them, not consenting that they should be given up, at any rate, which was in disobedience of said Berstler's orders. That this deponent understood at the time, which was also generally understood, that in the 4th article of Berstler's capitulation, among other things, it was stipulated, that said Chapin and his company of volunteers, should be paroled, and sent home; which fact said Berstler informed this deponent was true, at the time; that after said surrender to the enemy, said 4th article was, by said Berstler, EXPUNGED. That said Berstler assigned it as a reason, expressly, that if Chapin and his men should make their escape, the whole 14th regiment must be massacred.

That this deponent was frequently in scouting parties with said Chapin, under the command of Generals Dearborn, Lewis and Boyd, and that deponent was well acquainted with said Chapin, that he was a good man to those over whom he had command—a good soldier whenever and wherever there was danger to be encountered; and a good officer in any station assigned him; that he was continually active in the battle at the Beaver Dams, during the whole of the engagement.

JAMES ROUSE.

Sworn and subscribed this 14th day of June, 1836, before me.

HENRY SLADE, J. P.

As to the charges published by John Armstrong against me, of my infidelity to my country, my conduct during the war, and my courage in battle, I consider them all put at rest, without further testimony. The preceding affidavit of James Rouse, and the affidavit of Jonathan Dibble, which here follows, (two real veterans of the service,) together with the following statement of six of our old and respected fellow-citizens of this place, must be considered conclusive against this flagrant libeller. To rebut such vile, and at the same time such vague and unspecific charges, made after such a lapse of time, even this satisfactory and decisive evidence, presents to the rational mind not only a singular incident, but induces the most absolute and full conviction of the innocence of the accused, on the one hand, and of the wantonness of the accuser on the other.

To what fact or circumstance does he refer, when he speaks of my having "come forward as spokesman in favor of a man charged by many of his neighbors with giving intelligence to the enemy?" I know of none—nor can I discover any trace of such a transaction upon this frontier, during the war. There is none. There are many other witnesses whose names and characters may soon be thrown into the scales against the weight of Armstrong, McClure and Berstler, and their characters.

It is my intention to give, in succeeding pages, some references and particular statements in relation to the official conduct and cha-

acter of the "*soi disant*" Secretary Armstrong, and perhaps some of a more general and interesting character.

STATE OF NEW-YORK, {
Eric County, ss. }

JONATHAN DIBBLE, now of the city of Buffalo, in the said county of Erie, being duly sworn, says, that in 1813, he was in the military service in Canada, as a volunteer, in the corps of Major Cyrenius Chapin, and under his command. That the day or two but one before the expedition to the Beaver Dams, made by order of General Dearborn, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Berstler, he, with the said Major Chapin and about forty-five or fifty men, were sent out to reconnoiter the enemy—and that he went over the same ground where the battle of the Beaver Dams subsequently took place; that he, with the others, went on beyond Deeoos' stone house—meeting none of the enemy we returned to Fort George. One of the men staid behind and was taken by the enemy. On our way back to the Fort, we were again attacked; we again drove them back; they were composed of English and Indians; we stopped on our return and buried one of our men; that this deponent well recollects that the next evening we were ordered to return and to attack the enemy again; this expedition was to be commanded by Berstler; to this strong objections were made; that the said Chapin remonstrated, and desired that we should go under the command of Scott, Christie or Miller, and when it was found by him and the men that Berstler was to have the command, great displeasure was manifested and fully expressed. But the same evening we were marched for the Beaver Dams, under the command of Berstler; we arrived there at about 10 o'clock A. M.; that on our way Major Chapin was ordered to go on in advance; he soon returned and informed Berstler that the enemy was near the road, and that we should soon be attacked by them. We continued our march, in advance, until we heard a firing in our rear; we were immediately wheeled, and returned to the main body. On our way while returning, we met Colonel Berstler riding very rapidly towards us; when he came up to us he cried out, "Major Chapin, we are attacked." We continued on our way and were soon fired upon by the Indians: we wheeled to the left, charged upon and routed them. One of the Indians had killed three of our men: Major Chapin then ordered this deponent and three others to creep along towards that Indian and to shoot him; we did so, and this deponent then shot and killed the said Indian, took his gun, hatchet, &c., and returned back to the company. This Indian had, several times before, fired upon us, but endeavored to keep himself concealed. After our return to Berstler's corps, the firing ceased for some time; then we were again attacked by the Indians; we again charged upon them and drove them back; there was, then, considerable desultory firing upon us by the enemy, and particularly by the Indians.

Major Chapin was then ordered by Berstler to place the artillery in the most advantageous position, which was in the rear of Berstler's men, which he did. Berstler, with his men, then retreated back further in the rear of the artillery, leaving Major Chapin and his corps in the front, and he was ordered not to retreat nor to advance upon the enemy without express orders from Berstler. We soon received an order from him to retreat to his station, which order we obeyed. Soon after this our retreat, a party with a flag was discovered coming from the enemy; we were then ordered to form in column; the officer, Fitzgibbon, with the flag, was met by Berstler himself, in our front. Fitzgibbon demanded to know who commanded us? Berstler replied that he commanded. He then ordered us to surrender as prisoners of war, and said that if we did not immediately surrender, he should let the Indians and Hungarians upon us, and we should all be massacred upon the spot. Berstler then called forward Major Chapin, who advanced to them; Berstler told him that he was ordered to surrender. Major Chapin remonstrated. Berstler replied to him that the proposition of Fitzgibbon was a very fair one, &c. Chapin then proposed not to surrender to so small a number of the enemy; that there was not sufficient of

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them to form a guard for the prisoners; that he was indifferent as to the Indians; and he refused to surrender. He said that he belonged to another corps, and that, rather than to surrender, he would with his own men, fight their own way through the enemy to the army.

It was then proposed by Fitzgibbon, that we should surrender; the officers to wear their *sidearms*; the men to keep their *knapsacks*; to be marched to the Forty Mile Creek, to General Vincent's quarters, and then discharged upon their parole, and sent home. This was ultimately acceded to, with other provisions, that we were all to be well used; that none of the enemy, especially the Indians, should be permitted to plunder, abuse or misuse any one of them. We were then marched to the Forty; were there detained as prisoners, five or six days. Meantime, Baerstler and his men, were marched off, and taken down the lake to the enemy; our parole was refused; we were then marched to Burlington heights; there detained three weeks. During that delay, Dr. Chapin insisted that he should be permitted to visit his men, alledging that they were sick, and required his attention and advice. He did visit them several times; and during that time, several of his men escaped; some of them found their way to Fort George; some crossed the lake home. About thirty-two of us were put into two boats under a guard, and started for Montreal, as we were told. Captain Smith, one of Major Chapin's volunteers, was sick at the time of our embarkation, and at first declined to take the voyage; said he preferred to stay there for medical assistance and support. He however was persuaded by Dr. Chapin to embark with us, by assurances that our voyage would not be long or tedious; and that he might expect, soon to be with his friends. He embarked with us. Also, one of the soldiers (named Duel,) of the enemy, was embarked with us; he was in irons, and destined to have his trial at Kingston or Montreal.

The British soldiers of the guard, were principally in the boat where this deponent was; the officers were in the front boat, with Major Chapin, Captain Smith and Robert Kaene. The rear boat was rowed by us, the prisoners; and we were ordered to keep four rods in the rear of the boat containing the officers. Major Chapin, in our progress, and while we were rapidly progressing down the lake, made a sign to us, which was understood by — Sackrider, (who was subsequently a captain;) we plied our oars with greater force, and soon they were doubly manned; we were soon up with, and along side of the foremost boat; the officer of the guard, Showers, ordered us back; Chapin remonstrated, and we came along side. Major Chapin then seized the said officer and threw him down; we then all jumped on board that boat, and immediately disarmed all the guards. We then were ordered by Major Chapin to shift our course for Fort George, where we arrived safely the next morning. Lieutenant Showers, in his agony, finding himself and his men our prisoners, instead of our guards, requested to be put on shore. Major Chapin refused his request—told him to go with us—that we lived well—were good men, &c.

And this deponent further says, that during the whole of that campaign in Canada, and while he was there, Major Chapin was the most active, and engaged in more actions than any other officer there, during the time; that he was constantly and personally attentive to, and careful of all the men, and of their health, subsistence and comfort, with him, and under his command.

JONATHAN DIBBLE.

Sworn this 24th day of June, 1836, before me.

HARRY SLADE, J. P.

We the undersigned, observing from a newspaper publication that Major Cen-
trinus Chapin has been charged with having conducted during the late war in a
manner from which it might be inferred that he was unfaithful and treacherous
to his country, do hereby certify, that we resided in the immediate neighbor-
hood of said Chapin before and during the war, and had almost daily intercourse
with him; that we have no knowledge or recollection of his "having joined a

committee to remonstrate against the war," or even of the existence of such a committee; nor that he defended the case of any person "charged by his neighbors with giving intelligence to the enemy." On the contrary, we never suspected his "fidelity to his country," and considered him unusually zealous and active in such military operations, as he had in charge. We had personally, no opportunity of witnessing his conduct in the several engagements with the enemy, but the verbal and newspaper reports of the day bore unequivocal testimony to his bravery and good conduct.

E. WALDEN, CH. TOWNSEND,
GEORGE COIT, H. B. POTTER,
B. CARYL, JOSEPH LANDON.

Buffalo, June 28, 1836.

The following relation of transactions which took place on this Frontier during the War, probably might never have seen the light. It would not from my pen, were it not for John Armstrong's libelous publication of "Notices of the War of 1812."

Before this, they were not, by me, thought of sufficient importance to be put in print, or in any way laid before the public or posterity; they might, and doubtless, would have been forgotten even by those who were well acquainted with them at the time.

I well knew that I did my duty faithfully to my country during the war, and there let it rest. I asked for no monument either of stone or paper. Publicity, by me, was unthought of; even my children might have remained ignorant of much of my conduct, and of several transactions with the enemy. Nor do I in any manner envy this *soi disant* Secretary John Armstrong for his hard-earned glory or renown. Let honor thicken around and over him. Lord Bacon said well, that "a lame mare in the right road will beat a racer in the wrong." My name was by Armstrong brought forward and given to the public in a manner, calculated, if not intended, to cloud it with infamy.

HIS STATEMENT OF GENERAL DEARBORN'S CONDUCT.

Dearborn, as the Commanding Officer, took from the enemy Fort Niagara and Little York. He was a veteran of Bunker Hill. His well-established military character received confirmation and perpetuity from his conduct in the late war.

As to A's accusations against me, and my character, wherever they are specific as to date, place, or any prominent circumstances, may have already been sufficiently refuted and disproved. A vain boasting liar, and an opposer of the war, a coward in action. The

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following paper testimonies will surely, for the present, put the enemy, *hors du combat*.

I shall now merely mention the fact that with others here in 1812, I organised, controlled and assisted to retake our Brig Adams, which the enemy had previously captured, and the British Frigate Caledonia, from under the Batteries of Fort Erie.

—
BUFFALO, July 4, 1836.

Doct. Cyrenius Chapin, Buffalo.

DEAR SIR:—Learning that your conduct as an officer and as a citizen, during the late war with Great Britain, has recently been impeached under the sanction of a name sufficiently elevated to justify an appeal on your part to the public, my humble testimony is most cheerfully yielded, that great merit was conceded to you, in this community, at the time, as an active partisan officer, who, not stopping to bandy with constitutional scruples, was ever ready to embark in sudden and hazardous enterprises—so much so that your gallantry and devotion to the common cause, were almost proverbial on both sides of the strait. The part assigned to and successfully carried out by you in the memorable affair of cutting out two British armed vessels, from under the guns of Fort Erie, and the daring attempt by which you and your comrades rose upon and overpowered your captors, bringing them prisoners of war in an open boat across Lake Ontario to Fort Niagara, are matters of history, and should, I must believe, most amply vindicate your reputation as a soldier and as a patriot, in the minds of all who are familiar with the events of that day.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. B. ROCHESTER.

—
SANDUSKY CITY, June 30, 1836.

To Col. Cyrenius Chapin.

DEAR SIR:—You will please receive the enclosed as an act of justice to you. Having just now read and examined the "Notices of the War of 1812," by John Armstrong, and finding the conduct and character of Major Cyrenius Chapin impugned, I feel bound, as a citizen and an officer with him in that campaign, to state some facts relative to his conduct, character and reputation at the time. My intimate acquaintance with him during the war, authorises and requires of me a candid and full statement of facts as they took place.

Being myself in 1812, '13, '14 and '15, an officer in the regular army of the United States upon this frontier, I had a great opportunity, independently of my personal knowledge of, or acquaintance with Major Chapin, to be fully and correctly informed of his conduct and standing as an officer, and of the several engagements with the enemy in which he was a party.

I was, also, at head quarters, when the news of the defeat and capture of the party arrived. But at that time, nor at any time since, have I ever heard any blame attached to Major Chapin, either by the officers, soldiers or citizens, until the publication of John Armstrong's book. He, on the contrary, at all times conducted himself as a brave officer, good citizen and man. He was looked upon by the officers generally, as the most active and useful man in the service on this frontier, as well from his uniform personal bravery, as his particular knowledge of the enemy's country. His promptitude and activity were often spoken of by the officers as most decidedly meritorious, whenever he had been put into service or action upon requisition. It was well known and understood by all, that the kind and proper treatment of many of the prisoners, by the enemy, was the result of the interposition of Major Chapin. He at all times reprehended, and was opposed to violence upon, or interference with, either the persons or property of individuals, citizens in Canada, though enemies. I became well acquainted with him, in 1812, and have since continually been his immediate neighbor, until within the last two years. From, or during that time, I have never heard him charged by any one, with either cowardice or disloyalty; but on the contrary, have ever viewed him as a brave, loyal and good citizen and soldier.

Your friend and servant,

JOHN G. CAMP.

TORONTO, 8th July, 1836.

To Cyrenius Chapin, Esq., City of Buffalo.

MY DEAR SIR:—I returned to my home last evening, after an absence of some weeks, and found your letter of the 2nd ult., in which you ask me to state what I knew of you during the late war, and whether you were ever suspected in my country of being a traitor to the United States.

Were I to state in detail what I have known of you, and what I have learned from credible sources, it would carry me farther than I can, in the midst of the most pressing public duty, go; but I will briefly say, that I have hitherto considered you one of the most faithful and most devoted citizens of the United States, and one of her best and bravest defenders. In the summer of 1813, the capture of you and your mounted men was one of the principal objects I had in view; and having been fortunate enough to accomplish it, you were sent from the head of Lake Ontario in a batteau, with other prisoners of war, to be forwarded to Lower Canada, which batteau, and the guard having charge of you, you and your fellow prisoners captured and carried with you to your own shores. During the following winter you were again taken prisoner at Buffalo, when that town was captured, and sent to Quebec. I met you at Montreal, and you politely accepted an invitation to dine with me at the mess of the 49th Regiment; which invitation I certainly would not have given, had I thought you other than a faithful citizen and gallant defender of your country.

Upon the three charges made against you, as stated in your letter, I observe, that as to your being a "liar" I knew nothing; until I read your letter, I never

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heard your veracity called in question. If you are a "vain boaster," I had no opportunity of knowing it, but you certainly often threw yourself in the way of meeting your enemies. And as to your being a "coward," I declare that I always thought you a modern Quixote, and often have said so of you. In making this declaration, I am sure you will not understand it as intended disparagingly—I use it to show that I thought you much more brave than most of your comrades who were in arms against us.

The favorable impressions of you remaining on my mind are so strong, that only two days ago, I requested of a gentleman from Buffalo, who travelled with me, but whose name I did not learn, to present my best respects to you, which I hope he will not fail to do.

Believe me, my dear Sir, to be very truly yours,

JAMES FITZGIJBON.

BLACK ROCK, August 8th, 1836.

DEAR SIR:—I have received your letter of the 29th ultimo, accompanying a volume of General Armstrong's "Notices of the War of 1812," and pointing me to that part of its contents which purports to be a memoir by Colonel Beersler, and containing a gross and vulgar assault on your fame and character.

This libellous attack would hardly have deserved your notice, at the present day, but for the countenance thus given to it by the distinguished individual in whose name the book is put forth, and which attaches to it an importance that it could not, otherwise, claim; and I am not, therefore, surprised, that you should have felt it to be your duty, publicly to repel it: while I, at the same time, admire, and approve of the generous promptitude with which many of our most respectable citizens have already stepped forward, to rescue your reputation from such unmerited aspersions.

It so happened that during the whole period of the late war, except when you were a prisoner with the enemy, I was so situated as to be in the habit of almost daily intercourse with you, affording me the fullest opportunity to observe your course, political and military; and I take great pleasure in declaring, that I knew no individual who was, on all occasions, more open and decided in the expression of opinions approving of the justice of the war on our part—none who displayed more patriotic zeal and enthusiasm in encouraging and aiding its efficient prosecution—none who was more ready, in every emergency, to embark, and who actually did embark, in an almost uninterrupted succession of enterprizes against the enemy, involving imminent personal hazard, as well as great fatigue and privation—none more liberal of his purse—and, I think I may safely add—measuring the merit by the number and importance (and many of them were far from being unimportant) of the various commands and commissions which were confined to you, and the limited means furnished for their execution—none who rendered more valuable service to the army and country, than yourself. If but a small portion of our citizens, possessing equal consideration and influence, had exerted the same zeal and efficiency in the pro-

secution of the war, it would doubtless have been brought to a more speedy, and even a more satisfactory termination.

I remain, Dear Sir, very respectfully yours,
P. B. PORTER.

Col. C. CHAPIN.

BUFFALO, April 26th, 1836.

SIR:—Having observed in your “Notices of the War of 1812,” a certain narrative purporting to be from the late Col. C. G. Berstler, in appendix No. 24, Vol. 1. page 162, Note, &c. 250, in which he took the liberty of stating among other things, that Lieutenant-Colonel Berstler “knowing this man to be a vain boasting liar, and suspecting his fidelity from various circumstances, amongst which was that of having joined a committee to remonstrate against the war—and that of coming forward as spokesman in favor of a man charged by many of his neighbors with giving intelligence to the enemy,” &c.

Of this Colonel Berstler, report was current at the time, that he had been a broken down Methodist preacher—that at the instance of his friends he was billeted on the Government by which the pay would ensure him a better livelihood than his useful labors had done in his clerical vocation. Hence it is believed that this Knight of the Cross was willing to exchange the toils of a camp meeting for those of the *champ de mars*, with a zeal not according to knowledge. Not knowing of any other person of my name engaged in the war at the time alluded to, I am left to infer that his abuse was aimed at me. If it were, (of which I have no doubt,) I pronounce his account of me and my conduct, to be a wanton, wicked and inveterate lie—uncalled for and gratuitous—conceived in ill will and penned to gratify a cowardly spleen—willing to assign his defeat to any but the true cause.

If an officer in full life can so far demean himself—so far lose all self-respect—every moral sense, as to cruelly asperse the good name of a fellow soldier without remorse, without the least assignable motive, it is doubtful whether the sanctity of the *grave* ought to protect his memory.

It is a maxim, founded I think, in good sense, “*not to speak of the dead unless well;*” but when the deceased has so far withered from his duty while living as to try to affix a stigma on my character of the complexion above referred to, it does not, in my best judgment, become me to rest quietly under it, without giving my full and unequivocal denial of its truth, either in form or substance, especially coming from such a polluted source as I conceive this did. None but a coward's brain could concoct such crudities—none but a demon's heart could give utterance to such vile calumny.

The very fact alone, of his not having published his narrative during his life, is on the face of it, to an impartial lover of truth, suspicious. His authority is, therefore, of no value, nor are his statements to be relied on in the least. So far forth as relates to word or deed of mine, his story is a tissue of falsehood from begining to end—utterly unworthy of belief by even my worst enemies, for they will testify just the reverse of the affair.

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B. PORTER.

26th, 1836.

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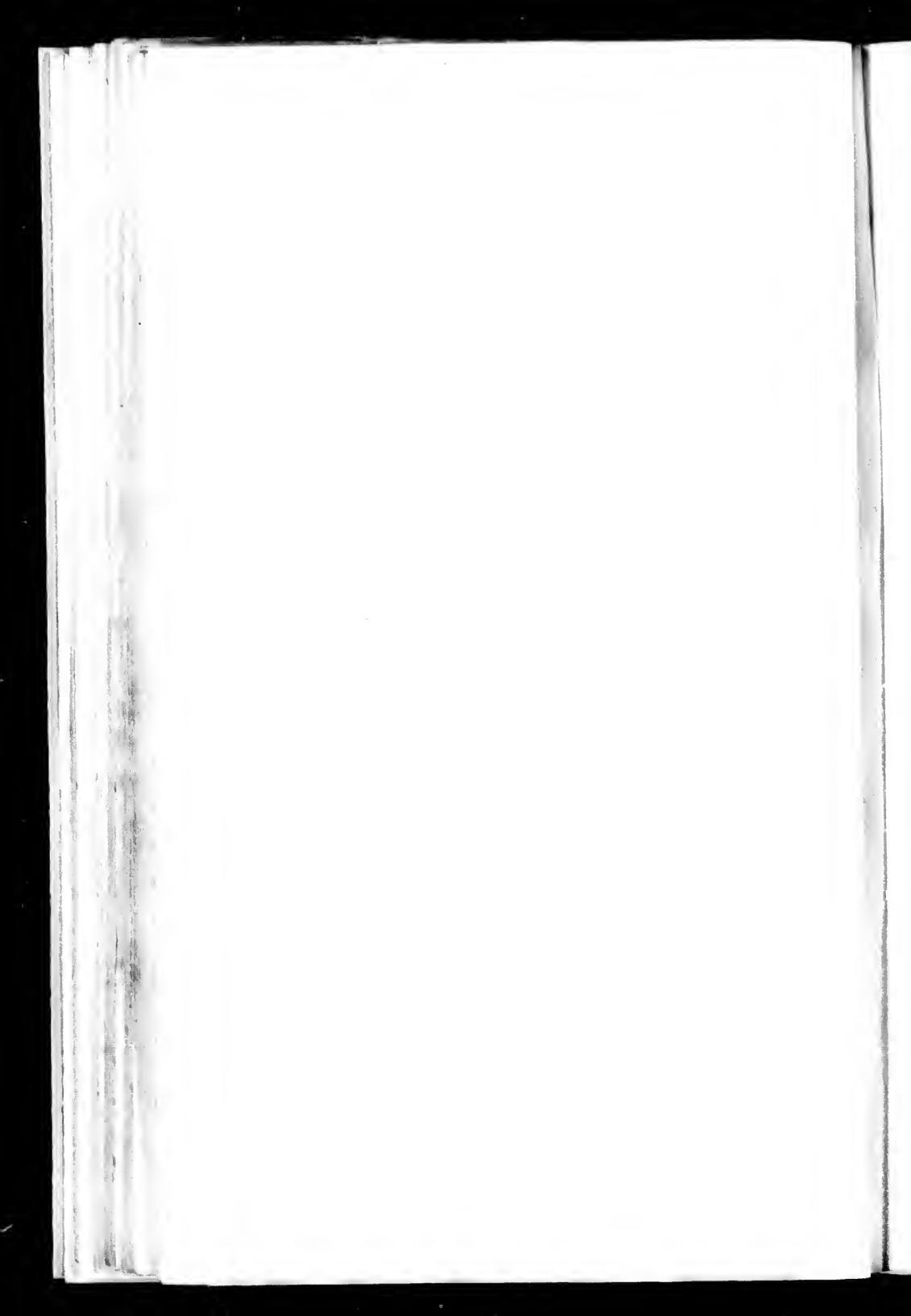
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Fortunately, however, there are living witnesses, credible as any who held a commission during the war of 1812, and who are actuated by a nobler spirit than to traduce and slander me; and whose characters are above reproach or suspicion. There is, therefore, no shadow of excuse for such a course of proceeding on his part unless his conduct may be ascribed to the effects of insanity.

When such a narrative is put forth by such an officer and published to the world as sober history, to be handed down to those who shall come after us—when the untruth of such a statement is set out, to my mind, in such bold and palpable relief—so derogatory to my character, I am constrained by a sense of duty for the cause of truth and my country to repel the same, with indignation.

In pages 46 and 47, of your "Notices," &c., you say—"the errors which yet remain to be noticed are attributable to the administration—a fact furnishing no reason why they should be treated with more ceremony than others with whom they are associated."

Now Sir, assuming your proposition to be true—permit me to approach you in like manner, when I say, I think I have just cause to complain of that narrative in its inception—with the slightest provocation—I conceive its publication under the sanction of your name as calling more loudly for redress. By it my feelings have been outraged, and also, the feelings of my friends. I appeal to your own sense of honor if I have not a right to reparation from your hands? a reparation as broad as the circulation of that foul slander to which I have called your attention?

In the mean while, I have the honor to be,
with due consideration,

Your obedient servant,
CYRENIUS CHAPIN.

Gen. JOHN ARMSTRONG, Red Hook.

—
RED HOOK, 22d May, 1836.

SIR:—Your letter of the 26th ult., was received on the 10th instant. The narrative of the late Colonel Börstler, which forms the subject of it, was intended as a defence against certain statements to be found in General Dearborn's official letter, in relation to the unfortunate expedition made to the Beaver Dams in the campaign of 1813, which the writer believed to have been derived from you. The narrative, when received at the War Office, was accompanied by a request—that it should be published in the National Intelligencer, "inasmuch as the General had omitted to send his (Colonel Börstler's) report of the expedition, which ought to have accompanied the General's statement, which was published in that journal." Notwithstanding the force and fairness of this appeal, the request was not granted, from a belief, that under existing circumstances, the publication of the narrative was not likely to do good, and by keeping up old quarrels, or generating new ones, might do harm. There can be no doubt but that in this decision the President exercised a discretion necessarily appertaining to his office—but I need hardly remark to you, that a writer of

history has no such power over well authenticated documents. His duty is, to present all the evidence he is possessed of on any question of public interest, without regarding its bearing on individuals or communities—still reserving to himself the power of accommodating his representations to such new and higher degrees of proof, as may come in his way. It is my intention to do this, in the succeeding volumes of the work, all criticisms which may be fairly and decently made upon what I have written, and it will give me infinite pleasure to be at right, where I have been wrong. With the proofs you possess, you can readily prepare a sketch which will promptly and permanently settle the question at issue between you and the late Colonel Berstler. I cannot, however, close this note without calling your attention to another document which will necessarily appear in vol. 2d, in relation to the sufferings on the Niagara Frontier after Wilkinson left Fort George. The paper I refer to is a letter from G. A. McClure to the War Department of the 25th of December, 1812. It made part of the documentary testimony sent to Congress with the President's Message, on the 2d of February, 1814, and has, of course, been before the public since that date. Any explanation from you on the subject of the above named letter, will be acceptable.

I am Sir, with much respect,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN ARMSTRONG.

Dr. CYRENUS COOKE, Buffalo.

APPENDIX.

Whoever throws a torch to fire a town, is held lawfully answerable for the consequences, however covertly the deed is done. The attack, in the "Notice," on many of the officers, who distinguished themselves in the late war, from one who once held a high place under the then government, deserves a few comments. Most of those who held command at that time, have friends who will avenge the injuries sought to have been inflicted on their memories. Of such, the deed will be enrolled by abler hands than the writer of these pages—"the race of Douglass can protect itself." The writer well knew General Dearborn, and is happy to say that much may be said in his favor. Of this, however, his biographer will avail himself. It is due to his memory to state, that he was a man of a clear head, a strong mind and a high and brave spirit. Plain and affable in his manners—with sagacity equal to devise any well-conceived plan of operations, and nerve to carry it into effect. Disting-

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guished in two wars, wherein his country had vast interests at stake, it is just to say of him, that he was the pride of the army and a benefactor to the land of his birth. Much of the disasters of the late war, was justly chargeable upon his superiors in office. It is easy of proof, at this late day, that before orders arrived at the place of his operations, counter orders were received by him. Under such embarrassing circumstances, could any thing but failure be anticipated? It is worthy of remark, that he was kept in a harrassed state of mind, a large part of the time he was on this frontier, and it is believed, that this was effected, in a great measure, by one who now seeks to slur his fame.

The attack, in the "Notices," on General Harrison, deserves the reprobation of every honest man in Christendom. The perversion of truth, is apparent on every page. What earthly motive the author could have, is not discoverable, unless it be for political effect. If so, General Harrison, however he might despise the effort to slander him, may rest assured, that fifty such historians, would only raise him, in the estimation of all men, whose good opinions are worth having. Allusion here, however, is only to the conduct of General Harrison, as an officer during the late war with Great Britain; and it is equally due, as well to him, as to the cause of truth and justice, that under all difficulties which he had to overcome, he acted his part well—very well indeed, and the wretch that seeks to sully his good name, under the specious garb of impartial history, is entitled to a seat in a mad house. Under the embarrassing circumstances in which he was placed, such as the almost impassable roads—the want of supplies of every kind—a wary and savage foe, closely watching his movements, it is a matter of admiration, that he succeeded, as well as he did. All the prominent officers associated with him, at that time, bear unequivocal testimony, to his good conduct, the result of cool and determined bravery, as well as indefatigable industry joined with a sound and unfailing discretion. Long, therefore, will his memory be cherished, as among the worthies of the land—by his compatriots in arms, and a grateful people. Some future historian, will do justice to his deeds when the partisan scribbler, with his unworthy slander shall have sunk into merited oblivion.

None but a ruffian can take delight in the invasion of the sanctuary of the dead. Peace to their ashes, should be the motto of every

good man. But there are provocations forming exceptions to the case considered. Colonel Bærstler's memory, therefore, has some claims upon sympathy—by his own showing. In a note accompanying his statement, as published in his "Notices," he exhibits much nervous irritability, while holding an interview with General Lewis, in which he shows more warmth of temper than would exactly comport with sound judgment, or historical accuracy. It then may be safely inferred, that he, himself, was then in such a paroxysm of rage, as to cleave down the necessary balance of judgment or just perception. Anger appears to have unhinged his faculties, and disappointment in his favorite project, appears to have soared the inner man. Some allowance, therefore, may be safely made for his impressions, under the circumstances in which he was placed. Again, the terror-struck appearance he exhibited when riding alone towards "Major Chapin," and while attempting to inform the men that "*they were attacked*," (as sworn to by James Reuse and Jonathan Dibble—see foregoing affidavits,) a fact, by the bye, as well known to the men as to him, (Bærstler,) and which clearly shows, that he (Bærstler) was so near insanity, that the difference between it and the contrary, was not perceptible. Here then we have his veracity impeached, by his own statement, of how angry a mood, he could fall into on so frivolous a provocation, and the alienation of mind, produced by fear, as established by two credible eye-witnesses.

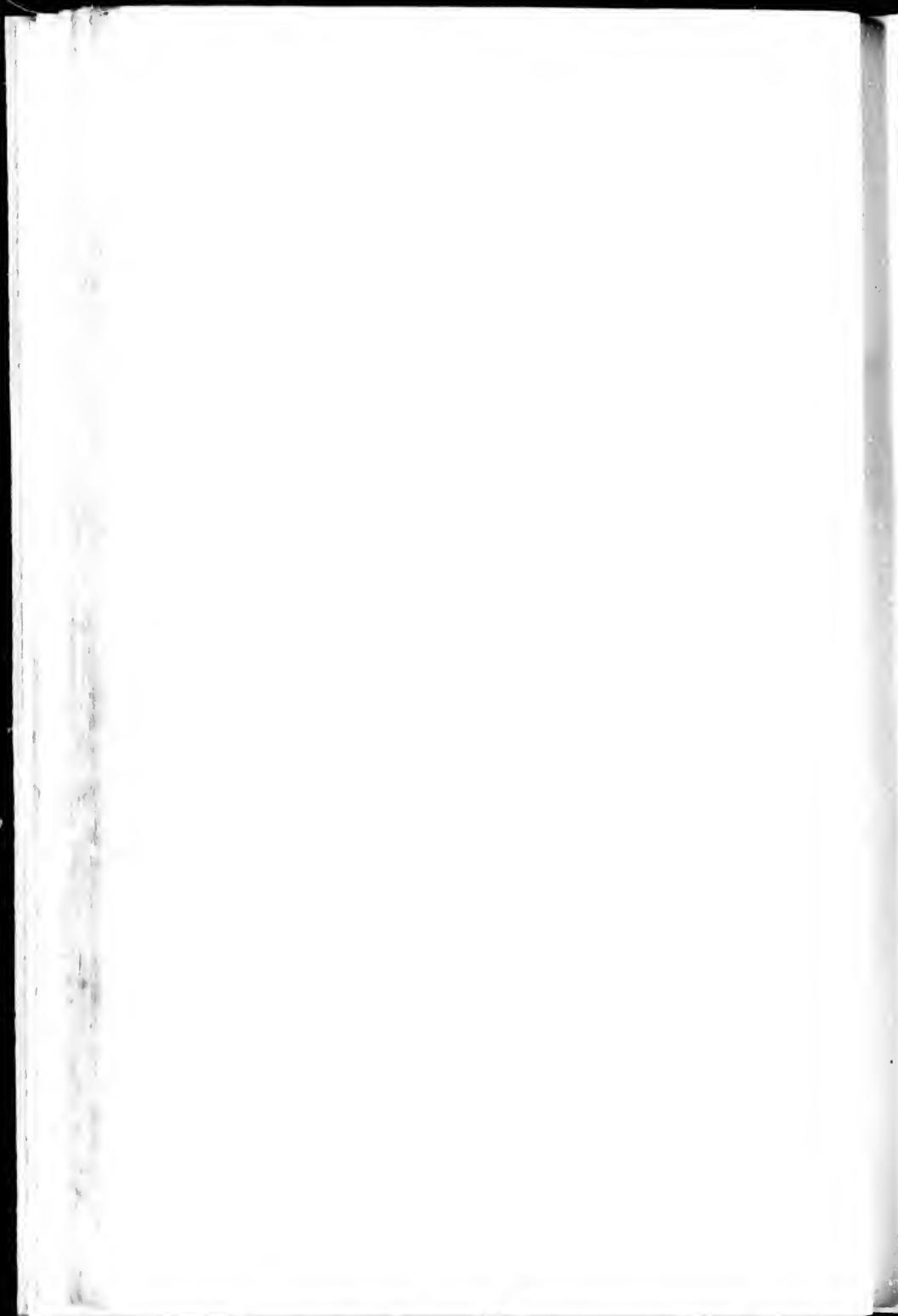
Again, this fop of a Bærstler says, that "on 23d June, 1813, *soi disant* Major Chapin called at the tent of Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler," &c. &c.

The vanity of Bærstler here exploded. The writer had a regular commission of Major while Eustis was Secretary of War, derived from the same appointing power that Lieutenant-Colonel (*Bobadil*) Bærstler did his. He must therefore be Lieutenant-Colonel, *soi disant*, or self-styled, as much as Major Chapin. It matters not for his sorry attempt at burlesque—that does not occasion the least trouble. This circumstance is only referred to show the mean contemptible spirit that actuated the man, how careful to speak of himself in the third person, and then attempt to make others believe that "Major Chapin" boasted of a title, a fact which never existed—and more, to show how much reliance is to be placed on the statement of a man, who by his own narratives, shows himself to be, in temper, a *Don Orlando Furioso* towards General Lewis—a sneaking pol-

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In the No. preceding this 24th, in the Appendix of said "Notices," is a letter purporting to have been written by said Armstrong, who was then either acting or real Secretary of War, and who must have known that "Major Chapin," during said Armstrong's official term, had and held a Colonel's commission. Then, why, it may be asked, did said Armstrong gather the statement of Bærstler, out of which to weave his web of history? The answer is obvious—he must have intended to "catch flies." The burden of Bærstler's song is, to exonerate himself from the charge of want of Generalship in his conduct at the time mentioned, and to assign the cause of his defeat, to any other than the true one.

The unparalleled impudence of Bærstler most strikingly appears in a following paragraph.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler knowing this man to be a vain boasting liar, and suspecting his fidelity, from various circumstances, amongst which was that of having joined a committee to remonstrate against the war, and that of coming forward as spokesman, in favor of a man charged by many of his neighbors, with giving intelligence to the enemy—he was heard by Lieutenant-Colonel Bærstler with indifference, and dismissed with coolness."

Here Bærstler assumes that he knows certain things without giving any probable cause for such knowledge; and moreover, attempting to be wiser than any of his acquaintance. An answer to this knowledge may be decisively given by referring to the certificate of Mr. Walden and others. As to his suspicions whether they were prompted by his anger or fear, it matters not; one thing is certain, if any well-grounded suspicions were had by Bærstler, why did he not cause the immediate arrest of said Chapin, and have him tried? What will the world think of a brave Lieutenant-Colonel, who should so far forget his duty to his country, as to suffer a *soi-disant* officer to pass around the line of encampment—to "hear him with indifference, and dismiss him with coolness?" This statement either carries falsehood on the face of it, or else Bærstler was a traitor to his trust.

As has already been said, it is ungenerous to invade the precincts of the tomb. Were Bærstler alive, he would disavow the narrative,

inconsistant as he was, by his anger towards General Lewis—his fear, as proved by Rouse and DRBLE of a few squalid Indians, and suspicious of fidelity, as he affirms he was of "Major Chapin," he would not, if alive, have the hardihood to state the same in his presence. It is now pretty clearly shown, if the narrator is worthy of credit, that Beerstler was a man subject to fits of violent anger—a victim to fear—a slave to unwarrantable suspicions, and above all, an intolerably vain man. In this view of the subject, the question recurs—to what degree of credit is his statement entitled? It is believed, to none. If the writer has succeeded in overthrowing his credit, it is thought the credit of the "Notices" is shaken to the centre—for it is believed in common affairs of life, if a witness is impeached in material points, his whole evidence falls to the ground.

What accession then, it may be asked, is the "Notices" to the rich mine of historical knowledge? In the eventful days referred to, in their pages, may it not safely be inferred, that much, very much of discoloring of facts, has been indulged in? Whether this happened through malice or ignorance, is a matter of which, the public are the better judges.

The man who indulges in a love of the marvellous—or who seeks to ridicule those whom he cannot equal in virtue, is upon the whole view of the case, a being to be pitied rather than envied. It is believed that an impeachment of the veracity of the "Notices" is substantially made out; at any rate, so far forth as the writer himself, is concerned. It is a poor excuse to plead ignorance of facts, while they are within the reach of a historian, and a most wretched expedient to substitute fiction for truth, or sarcasm for candid inference. Leave is now taken of the subject for the present, with a wish that the author of the "Notices" may rest satisfied with his laurels won, either as a soldier or historian, in that retirement, from which he ought not to have emerged, in compassion to his reputation.

Nothing more need, perhaps, be added, unless something like the following extract.

"What is history? Is it the eloquence of Livy—the shrewdness of Tacitus, or the profound sense of Polybius? Not only those who have participated in the conduct of national affairs, but those also, whose attention has been engrossed by personal concerns, cannot have failed to observe, that facts, as well as motives, are frequently misrepresented—that events are attributed to causes which never

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existed, while the real causes remain concealed. Presumptuous writers, affecting knowledge they do not possess, undertake to instruct mankind by specious stories founded on idle rumor and vague conjecture. Those who are well informed smile at the folly. Great minds disdain to tell their own good deeds: it seems, moreover, to those who have managed public business, almost impossible that the title tattle of ignorance should meet with belief. Nevertheless, such writings, though sheltered by contempt, from contemporaneous contradiction, are raked out, in a succeeding age, from the ashes of oblivion, and relied on as authority. History, compiled from such materials, can hardly teach the sciences of human nature. It is, at best, an entertaining novel with the ornament of real names. Philosophy, indeed, at a later day, may bring her balance of probability, put the evidence of official facts in different scales, and deduce fair-seeming conclusions from an assumed principle that man is a rational creature. But is that assumption just? or, rather, does not history show, and experience prove, that he is swayed from the course which reason indicates, by passion, by indolence, and even caprice? When the foundation is false, the superstructure must fall. Such writings, therefore, however illumined by the rays of genius, or adorned by the charms of style, instead of showing man a just image of what he is, will frequently exhibit the delusive semblance of what he is not.—*Gen. Morris' Dis. to N. Y. Hist. Soc. 4th September, 1836, p. 4, 5.*

If there is force in the foregoing description, of what history frequently is, and moreover, what it ought to be, it is hoped that those interested, may profit by the delineation. So far as relates to the "Notices," it may well be wished, that truth and candor will hereafter, always have a due share of influence on the conduct of such as shall be desirous of giving an impartial history of our "beloved country," and its invaluable institutions, as well as of the conduct of the actors in the great struggle for independence, from the dawn of the revolution, to the latest day of its political existence. With this view, the subject of the "Notices" will be dismissed, in doing which, the writer will only ask such indulgence towards him, as would be accorded to any other citizen, under like circumstances—to hear his statements, and pass that opinion upon his conduct during the war; the late attack upon his character, in the "Notices," before referred

to, in this defence, and he will cheerfully abide the result to which the candid reader shall arrive.

The publication of the following remarks, though out of place, and delayed by circumstances not under my control, will not appear improper here; and though I purpose to be concise and pertinent, my intention is to redeem the promise I made to remind Mr. Armstrong of some facts, and to make some suggestions, with a view to his greater accuracy and more particular detail, should he put forth a second volume of his "Notices of the War," which from his first he has led the public to expect. I sincerely hope, the following observations and facts, may benefit him, and also facilitate his labors.

The first, the greatest object in the progress of war—the primary and most sacred duty of those who have the control when a country is about to be attacked or invaded, is, the protection and security of the National Edifices, Archives and Functionaries. History informs us, that in Europe, they were subjects of special care and provision—secured and protected from all danger—from riots and even from disorder.

In cases when defence by force against the invader had become impossible, resort to treaty has been uniform, and generally available. Two modern cases may be seen at one glance—the destruction of Moscow by its owners—of Washington by the invader. With the former, treaty—negotiation was out of the question. It was a war for submission or extermination—slaves fighting slaves—both commanded by despots. With the latter, freemen, citizens, were defending against those, who at least, profess to be free—both commanded by officers who ought, and who did profess to be enlightened and humane—on our side they were such. It was understood that negotiation was adopted or attempted; if so, the cause of its failure is not known generally. Washington was abandoned by its defenders, and, to the astonishment of its inhabitants, on the 24th day of August, 1814, the capitol of these United States, the house of the President, &c., were destroyed by fire. The next day, the British left the city, and in their own time, returned, unmolested to their shipping.

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It has been well and truly said by an accurate and unbiased historian, that "the capture of Washington reflected disgrace upon the ^{country} by whom it ought to have been defended."

Whether this disgraceful affair was in fact the result of Mr. Armstrong's conduct—his ignorance—his imbecility—insanity, or moral profligacy, I am not able to determine. Many facts were there known, and more rumors were afloat. Whether his baseness was distinctly known to the Executive, or merely distrusted, and the subject of opinion and general report, is not now material to the public, or to Armstrong himself, or his posterity. However it may have been, the President, no doubt, determined and conducted properly and with discretion. Had there been specific evidence, it would, doubtless, have been made the subject of legal and formal investigation, unless considered improper and unnecessary from the character and magnitude of the offence, or the insignificance of the offender. As the matter now stands, his name and character, will of course be handed down, by the historian, with strong imputation, if not stigma. The hostile approach of the enemy, and the probable extent of their force, had, or should have been, for some time known at the Department. Why then were not means provided—effectual measures promptly taken to ensure the safety—the salvation of the capitol, and the property appertaining, of such incalculable value to the nation, at the time, and for succeeding ages? Nothing can ever replace or restore the libraries—the specimens of the works of taste, the arts and sciences, &c., which were destroyed. No money can repay their value.

It is consolation however, to every *American citizen*, that the Executive did, upon the next convention of the appointing power, cause the Secretary to be removed, and that important office to be filled by a more trust-worthy incumbent—William H. Crawford. Mr. Armstrong then had the privilege to retire with the spoils of office, if not of the enemy, to Red Hook—there, without intrusion or disturbance, to review his various acts and doings, and to ponder upon the vicissitudes of life and fortune, and upon his own frailties. One more suggestion, and for the present, at least, I shall consider myself, at liberty to leave Mr. Armstrong in the quiet and uninterrupted occupancy of his domicile and family friends in Putchess.

When I was, by him, accused of being "a vainglorious liar—a coward—a traitor to my country," &c.; when he had given publi-

city and permanency to those accusations in the shape of historical "Notices of the War," designed for posterity, I did not appeal to and rely upon my friends and fellow-citizens exclusively. Their evidence might have been considered or represented as too feeble, perhaps tainted with friendship or partiality. I had resort to the testimony of the enemy. Captain Fitzgibbon—the British officer, to whom I, with my select corps of sharp-shooters, was surrendered by Mr. Armstrong's favored friend, and the authority for his libels, Baerstler—he willingly and most promptly stepped forward and certified against those libels of this our own professed historian.

Situated as Mr. Armstrong was at the time—Secretary at War of the United States, he, of course, can readily command their certificates of his patriotism—his devotion to his country, its rights and its preservation. They were, unquestionably, manifested to those officers at the time. If not, his situation is certainly not now enviable. He can find relief and consolation, only, in the reflection that this is a world of vice and misery, filled with ungrateful unfeeling men, clothed with the ensigna of wealth and official station. There I shall leave him to repose. Should he deem it necessary or feasible further to attack my character or my conduct, or require of me personally, either advice, information or chastisement, I shall at all times, hold myself in readiness to answer his call: mean while, remaining as usual, the public's humble servant,

CYRENIUS CHAPIN.

Buffalo, September, 22d, 1836.

ERRATA.—Page 9, in remarks following extracts from Armstrong's "Notices," 3d line from commencement, instead of "before the expedition ordered out," read "before the expedition *was* ordered out," &c. Same page, 5th line in remarks, instead of "what the expedition," read "*that* the expedition," &c. Page 21, 11th line from top, instead of "the President exercised a discretion *necessary*," read "the President exercised a discretion *necessarily*," &c. Page 37, 4th line from top, instead of "I organised, controlled and assisted to retake," read "I organised, controlled and assisted *a party* to retake," &c. Page 39, in Gen. Porter's letter, 4th line from bottom, instead of "commissions which were *confided* to you," read commissions which were *confided* to you," &c.

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